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Anthony, the Hermit visits Helladia. She confesses the true faith, and dies in peace—(p. 100.)

THE QUAY OF THE DIOSCURI:

A History of Hicene Times;

823.89

N 258

WRITTEN IN GREEK,

Neale, John M.

BY

(MACARIUS,

MERCHANT OF TUNNIES AND PALAMYDES; *pend*)

And now translated from two Alexandrian Manuscripts.

5837

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THE QUAY OF THE DIOSCURI:

A History of Nicene Times.

*A dinner at the house of Theonas the merchant.—
Arius relates how his last sermon had been received.
—He and Mennas dispute.—Mennas and Macarius
go down to the Quay, and meet the Deacon Athanasius.*

YOU have requested me, my children, to relate to you at length the history of my youth, which you have hitherto heard imperfectly and in broken fragments. It is impossible that I, now in my eighty-fourth year, can look back to those early times without many a sad recollection of former sins, and many a remembrance of dear friends who have long since been taken to their rest. Yet, as I draw nearer to the time when I shall also, if God's mercy only be with me, enter into the same keeping of Sabbath, I feel more disposed to comply with your desires, lest some passages which are not unworthy of record should perchance utterly perish from the memory of men. Forgive me, then, my children, my weakness and tediousness, if they should seem to require pardon; and be well assured of this, that, in all I shall relate, I shall set down the pure, simple

truth, as plainly and briefly as I can. In this, the last task of my life, I put my trust in Him Who hath guarded me all my days, that He would also keep me from offending in this my poor endeavour to set forth His glory. And as he who wrote the Maccabees saith, "If I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired : but if meanly, it is that which I could attain unto."

I was born, then, in this same house where I now live, towards the middle of the great persecution of Diocletian. My father, Theonas, was one of the richest citizens of Alexandria ; at that time he had not received the true faith. My mother, Theophila,—and even now, after so long a separation, how do I long to dwell once more with her !—was even then a Christian. She had been persuaded, more out of a frolic than from any other cause, to attend the preaching of Peter, who was then bishop. The word fell into no unfruitful soil ; she became a catechumen, and finally received illumination at the hands of one Arius, a notable priest. He advised her, for the present, not to acquaint her husband with the change, but to wait her opportunity ; and, as they lived in perfect love together, so it was his hope that she might in time bring her husband into the fold. But, before she had found meet occasion, the persecution broke out, and from that time, being of a timid nature, she dared not to breathe one

syllable of her dearest hopes for the next world to him whom she loved best in this. In the persecution, as I said, I was born; and some two years after, my sister Helladia. Also about the same time, a dear friend of my father's dying, left in charge to him an infant daughter, by name Theodora, whose mother died in giving birth to her. Some little property she had of her own; and my father brought her up as his ward, in his house, with all the care and tenderness that my sister herself received.

But those early years I pass over. When the persecution ended, my father, who had long felt well disposed towards the true faith, found out that my mother was a Christian. In a very short time he also believed, and was baptized; and I remember myself the day when I, and Helladia, and afterwards, Theodora, were admitted to the life-giving water, yet being quite young.

My father, as I said, was rich; and it is written, "How hardly shall a rich man enter into the kingdom of heaven!" I doubt not that he is now with God; only this I would say, that the affairs of this life engrossed far more of his thoughts than they did of my sweet mother's. He was very liberal and hospitable, and popular among the merchants; also he had good reputation for knowledge of mercantile affairs. Twice he was chosen to go to Nicomedia, when the Emperor resided there, in order to obtain the redress of some com-

mercial grievance; and both times he returned with success.

As we grew up, I received my instruction with the design that I should succeed him in his counting-house; and my sisters—for so I used to call them both—were taught more than the majority of ladies then usually learnt. They could speak Latin fluently; Coptic they could talk from their nurse Ammonarium; and they were well read in all the best authors of our native Greek. As our house, which was a general agency as well as a bank, had dealings in Palestine and Syria, I was also taught at an early age the language of that country too.

I do not remember the time when I did not love Theodora. In all our little troubles as children we were each other's comforter; as we grew up, we learnt to think of each, if not quite so openly, perhaps only the more deeply; but I entered my twenty-second, and she her twentieth year, and never yet had word of love passed between us. But my sister was betrothed, shortly after she was nineteen, to the son of Chenouda, a rich merchant and a neighbour of ours, by name Mennas. It was his desire to enter the diaconate, and, in process of time, the priesthood perhaps; not for lucre's sake, for though he was one of the youngest among many sons, yet he was well provided for by his father; but because he desired to do what he might for the Name of the Lord and our great

God, Jesus Christ. I perceive that now, yearly, a stronger feeling is growing up in the West against the marriage of the clergy; but at that time there was but little of such an idea prevalent anywhere, and then, as now in Egypt, it was a matter of every-day occurrence. Various reasons, however, deferred the marriage, and it was determined it should take place in the autumn. For I now speak of a beautiful spring in the year which had Constantine the Emperor for the fifth time and Licinius the younger, for consuls^a.

You know that this house stands in the parish of the Baucalis, the oldest church, they say, in Alexandria. For many years the parish priest—one of the twelve cardinal priests of this great city—had been an ecclesiastic, by name Arius. He it was that baptized my mother and gave her the advice of concealing her religion; he, too, baptized my father, and then us. He was at this time about fifty, tall, well-made, somewhat thin from his repeated and rigorous fasts; a high forehead, a bright black eye, head somewhat bald, large lower jaw, and a smile of enchanting sweetness. Whatever were the advice he gave young converts, he had greatly exposed himself in the time of persecution. His alms were very large, for he was well off, though not exactly rich, in this world's goods. Mighty he was in the Scriptures, most diligent in visiting the poor, and con-

^a i.e. A.D. 319.

stantly to be seen in the low wretched houses that skirted the quays. We were all deeply attached to him, my father more especially. He had, however, been in some trouble during Peter's time, and had been excommunicated by him, but had been received again into communion by Achilles, and stood so high in the reputation of all men that, on the death of that prelate, he had all but been elected Bishop of Alexandria, Alexander obtaining that dignity only by a few votes.

And now I will relate the events of the first day that, if I may so say, began the history I am to tell you. My father was, as I said, fond of company, and three or four times a-week he invited a few of his friends to supper. On this day he had done so, in the very room where I now write; I look from the window yet once more, that I may recall the scene as it was then.

“What, you here, my little Glycerium, watching your grandfather with those great blue eyes,—you pet? Let me lean on your shoulder, and look out of the window.”




Close below, a garden, terraced up towards the house; small, but well stocked, and sending up its fragrance to the morning breeze: heliotropes, roses, Persic^b apples in full blossom, figs, balsams; the bees busy at their sweet task. Below, the crowded alleys and streets: but far below,—for the house stands on an artificial eminence,

^b Peaches.

and the garden, though not large, keeps off the close vicinity of the town:—there, amidst the tall quay-houses, the dome of the Baucalis. Further, the glorious Mediterranean, and the Pharos. The harbour full of ships; the light liburna; the long cercurus from the Archipelago; five triremes; heavy laden vessels from the Port of Rome,—ah! it is just the same as seventy years ago. Over just such a view the sun was then setting, for it was about Mesopentecost, as we sat down early to supper. My father always employed the *stibadium*^c: our own family, as I have said, made five; the three guests were Mennas and Arius, and an elderly lady, a diligent hearer of Arius, by name Diphila. And thus we were placed: my father and mother in the middle; on her right, Arius; on his left, Diphila; next to Arius, Helladia; next to her, Mennas; next to Diphila I sat, having Theodora on my left.

After the eggs had been removed—"What is this," said my father, "that I hear of our excellent Pope? Euthydemus told me on Change to-day that there had been some trouble at St. Mark's last Sabbath, and still more on the Sunday."

"It is a painful subject, Sir; a very painful

^c The earlier Romans used three tables, arranged thus: 
Under the first emperors a sigma table—so called from the Greek letter—came into fashion: they usually had seven. 
Still later, the *stibadium* could accommodate eight. 

subject to me," said Arius, to whom the question was addressed. "Perhaps there is a mistake: I would willingly trust so." And he looked grave and distressed.

"You were somehow concerned in it, if I have rightly heard," said my father: "give us an idea of what passed. But first let me recommend to your notice the Thasian,—bring some, Xanthias;—I got it at the sale of Telesphorus's effects,—a sudden crash, indeed."

The Thasian was done justice to, and then Diphila made some remark about an importation of silk, finer than had ever before been seen in Alexandria. My father seemed to have forgotten the question he asked; but Arius, so it seemed to me, did not intend that it should be hushed up.

"You were speaking, Sir, of the unfortunate occurrence at St. Mark's. Now, painful as it is—"

"I beg your pardon, so I was,—I had forgotten. But I am interrupting you."

"Painful as it is," resumed the Priest, "it is as well, perhaps, that the truth should be told. Our Bishop,—I am sure, as excellent a man as ever lived: I don't call him a deep theologian, I suppose no one would, but a most amiable, excellent person,"—(I saw my sister drinking in with her whole heart the words,)—"was preaching in the Great Vespers of the Paralytic^d on that stanza—

^d An explanation is necessary. The Sunday of the Paralytic—so called from the Gospel—is the third after Easter, and conse-

you will all remember it—‘The paralytic, unburied corpse, cried out when he beheld Thee, Have mercy on me, O Lord, for my couch is my tomb.’—You know the passage?”

“Perfectly,” said my mother.

“Well, he spoke, naturally enough, on the power of our Lord in healing the sick and raising the dead; nothing at first could be more suitable, nothing more beautifully put; not quite theologically, you understand, but it was a popular discourse. At last, I must say, he proceeded to exaggerate that power to a fearful extent; in fact, he as good as said that our Lord was God Almighty, and made Him to be of the same power as the Father. I was—”

“But, Sir,” said Mennas, “you surely do not—”

“Allow me,” continued Arius. “I happened to be there, and could not refrain from saying aloud to those about me, ‘This is not the doctrine of the Gospel.’ Perhaps I was wrong to make any remark at the time: I should have reserved it—”

“Will you permit me,” said Mennas, “to observe—”

“My dear Mennas,” cried my father, “you must allow our excellent friend to conclude what he was saying uninterrupted.”

quently that preceding Wednesday, Mesopentecost. The Great Vespers is the festival office of Vespers (and Compline) for the highest occasions.

“I was merely remarking,” said Arius, meekly, “that perhaps I should not at that moment have expressed my sentiments on the subject. But, I confess, I have always thought much of the blessing pronounced on those that are valiant for the truth; and, weak as my testimony is, feeble as I am altogether, I hope I shall never be wanting when that is attacked. The Bishop, I have since heard, was not aware that I had expressed my sentiments; and it happened that, in order to shew that our competition had not broken the bonds of Christian charity between us—”

“Most generous, I am sure,” said my mother. ;

“Hush, my little heart,” interrupted my father. —“Had not broken them, Sir, you say.”

“We had agreed that, last Sunday, he should preach in the Baucalis, and I at St. Mark’s. I hear that to you he did not enter on any controverted subject: I confess I could not take the matter quite so coolly. I took for my text that most divine passage, ‘My Father is greater than I,’ and hence I shewed that, while none could be more willing than myself that all honour short of the highest should be paid to Jesus of Nazareth, I neither could nor would, out of any speciousness of religion, permit that glory to be ascribed to Him which can be appropriate only to the Eternal Father. I am sorry to say,” he continued, in a most gentle and sweet voice, “that my remarks were not taken quite as I could have wished: a

considerable tumult was excited ; some of the congregation called out, ‘This is not the faith we have received from our fathers ;’ other some, ‘Out with the second Cerinthus!’ ‘Anathema to the new Basileides!’ But I bore all patiently, remembering that it is written, ‘Blessed are ye when men shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for the Son of Man’s sake.’ ”

“I beg your pardon,” said Mennas, “but I must and will speak ; I cannot sit at table and hear these novel doctrines : I will leave it, Sir,”—he turned to my father,—“if such be your will, but I cannot conscientiously remain if Arius thus speaks.”

My father looked annoyed. “Arius,” said he, “is my guest, and though these matters are something too deep for a simple layman, yet I must not have him thus interrupted in his discourse.”

“I grieve deeply to seem disrespectful to you,” said Mennas, “but—”

“Let there be no difficulty about me,” said the Priest ; “I respect zeal wherever I find it, even though it be not according to knowledge : and I will not vex my young friend by—Ha ! a splendid mullet indeed.”

At that time, my dear children, even at Christian tables, it was usual that a live mullet should be brought in to die. Now, our holy faith has, as in other things, so in that, much softened our customs, and what was then highly applauded

would now be esteemed barbarous. I remember that fish, for it was one of the last I saw: how its glorious colours flashed from gold to living silver, swam in liquid purple, melted into ruby, softened into exquisite pink, till the lines of life died out, with the convulsions of its poor fins, into a dull flabby white. The conversation changed, and no more was said on any theological question at that dinner.

As the evening breeze fluttered over the boundless Mediterranean, some of the company took a turn on the terrace which my grandfather had constructed in the upper part of the garden, and on which you, my sweet Theophila, so often gather flowers for your grandmother. Mennas found himself at the side of Helladia, and began to speak.

"I fear me, my Helladia, you were not pleased with my expressing myself as I did at dinner to-day."

"Why should you think so?"

"I have not studied those dear eyes so long as not to be able to read what they mean."

"Well, Mennas, I *was* sorry."

"But," he said, in rather a vexed tone, "could I do less?"

"Why needed you to interfere at all?"

"I cannot hear flat heresy spoken, and not protest against it."

"I am a woman, and not versed in theology;

but to me, what our priest said was only common sense."

"But not the common faith, Helladia."

"Then it soon will be: I believe what he said exactly."

"Oh my Helladia, you will break my heart! Believe that our Lord is a creature like other creatures?"

"No, not so; unlike other creatures; more excellent than they, but a creature still."

"Now God have mercy on us both, dearest! Him whom I worship as very God of very God, that you—you who with me should have but one faith and one hope—should regard Him as a creature! How long has this been?"

"Till the last year, Mennas, I took my faith on trust, vaguely and indistinctly. I was worshipping I knew not what. Then Arius taught me,—oh so gently; oh so wisely!"

"The cowardly rascal!"

"Mennas, you shall *not*: say that again, and we had better break off our engagement. I owe him more than I can express; he is the holiest, wisest, dearest—"

"Helladia, you will drive me mad."

"Then let us talk of something else."

"Talk of something else, and leave you, whom I so dearly love, in so great an error!"

"Say another word against Arius, and I go in."

"Listen, my Helladia: will you not hear what

some other priest would say in this matter? I don't ask you to believe me, but some one whom you may fully trust,—our Bishop, for example."

"The Bishop! never. It is because the Bishop hates Arius, and has never forgiven him for having so nearly been elected, that he persecutes him now."

"Why, Helladia, by the man's own account he began the controversy himself."

"In the church, perhaps; but the Bishop began it long before in parties and in private conversations. No, I will not hear any one; and as I don't want to be angry with you, I shall go in."

Mennas, in great distress, came to me. "I say, Macarius," he cried, "I want a quarter of an hour's talk with you, alone—can it be had?"

"This moment," replied I, "if you don't mind a walk: my father wants a message taken down to the Quay, and I was just going there?"

"Have with you then." And we were soon in the broad, handsome street which led down to the Quay of the Dioscuri, as it was then called, from a temple of that name which stood close to my father's premises. They were nearly the same as those which at this day I occupy, only they are now called, as you know, from the blessed martyr St. Metras, him that was one of the first to suffer in Egypt in the persecution of Diocletian."

"Your sister has lost her head to that fellow,"

he began. "Were you not terrified at what he said?"

"Surely I was."

"Well, she endorses all of it."

"Pooh, pooh! you take it too seriously. She is naturally fond of Arius, but if he goes on in this fashion, he will soon either be reduced to order in the Church, or become a heretic out of it; and either way, so far as you are concerned, will be the same."

As we were crossing the street of Ares, a crane, swinging up a heavy barrel of flour into an upper story, blocked the way for a moment, just as we were over against a cobbler's stall.

"I say He that begot is the greater," said the cobbler.

"You are a heretic," said the other; "He is not."

"That is good argument, Sir," said a bystander to the latter speaker.

"And *I* say that *he* is the heretic," vociferated the cobbler.

"And there is a great deal in what you observe also," remarked the listener.

We passed on. "There," said Mennas, "you see the subject has already got to be discussed in the streets. To be sure, we Alexandrians do dearly love a theological dispute."

"Good heavens," cried I, "what wickedness in the man, to set this stone rolling! And who can tell where it will stop?"

As I spoke, a young deacon met us with whom I was slightly, but Mennas intimately, acquainted. His name was Athanasius. Though at that time we neither of us could imagine the great work to which God designed to call him in His Church; still we looked on him as one who would fill a considerable space in the thoughts of people wherever he might be thrown. He was tall, spare, muscular, ascetic looking, with moral courage that was never surpassed, but not physically bold. I remember that day a large dog came up snuffing and smelling at his toga, and the Deacon shuffled uneasily about, and seemed uncomfortable till the intruder was got rid of.

"A good evening to you, Athanasius," said Mennas. "What! are you pressed for time, or will you walk with us?"

"Nay, I came out for a stroll," said he, turning.

"You look as if you needed the air," said I; "over-working yourself, I fear."

"No," he returned; "but the Bishop has appointed me to preach at St. Mark's next Sabbath, and bade me be more than usually painstaking, and I would not discredit his appointment."

"What! about the disturbance that Arius made?" enquired Mennas.

"The same," answered the other; "you don't know how it spreads."

"Why, truly, we heard a cobbler discussing

theologically in the street of Ares but this moment," said I.

"And so you may in every street. The Bishop, I assure you, is exceedingly uneasy. The poison has been creeping on for these months. I am not sorry for the outbreak, it will do good."

"Why did not the Bishop interfere sooner?" enquired I.

"For two reasons," replied Athanasius. "In the first place, it was chiefly done by private conversations, and principally among women; and though I assure you I have been told of fearful blasphemy uttered by that man, it is not easy to get any one who has really heard it to come forward. And then, you know, the fact that Arius was a rival candidate with our Bishop for the episcopate, would make anything that Alexander did regarded as a matter of spite, rather than of zeal for the truth."

"I must leave you for a moment," said I, for we were now at the entrance to the Quay. And while I went in to give directions regarding the unloading of a ship just arrived from Massilia, the two friends discussed—what delicacy to me had prevented them alluding to before—the conversation which had passed between Mennas and my sister. I remember nothing that occurred worthy of record on our way home. We bade adieu to Athanasius at our gate, and Mennas only just came in to say good-night.

CHAPTER II.

Macarius is betrothed to Theodora.—He angers his father.—A synod is summoned against Arius.—Theonas goes to Ptolemais.

You may imagine that all this made me very unhappy. For some time past, without any reason that I could, in so many words, assign to myself, I had begun to mistrust Arius. He had a quiet way, while seeming to speak of others with great candour,—nay, more than candour, with high praise,—of so qualifying what he said as to make you believe that the person spoken of was nothing in himself; and that nothing but a benevolence all-embracing as that of Arius could have discovered, and would be willing to publish, his good qualities. You saw how he quietly ran down the character of our Bishop at the dinner party, while seeming in every possible way to favour him. So it was always.

Well, it was wonderful how the controversy spread at Alexandria. You know what a hair-splitting, logicising, philosophical set the citizens are; how they hold a logomachy dearer than anything else: and the seed sown by Arius was now bearing most deadly fruit. Merchants, lawyers, officers, seemed as much interested in the question as divines, and the shops at Alexandria were full

of debate on the deepest mysteries of religion. Business seemed in abeyance; polemical reasoning took its place. And still the partizans of Arius grew in strength and importance, and the worthy Bishop seemed unable to weather the storm.

What grieved me more than aught beside was this, that my father, from holding what he called a philosophic medium between the two contending parties, gradually came over, heart and soul, to that of Arius. He assisted him in every way; with money,—for more than one messenger was sent to Palestine, where the priest of the Baucalis had influential friends,—by openly taking his part, and by constantly inviting his principal friends, and thus giving strength and organization to the party.

Of Mennas I saw but little. He seemed to avoid Helladia, and she, for her part, appeared to hang more than ever on the words of Arius, and to treasure them up, as if they were infallible.

It happened that one day I was strolling in the garden of which I have already spoken, and which my father, in the heart of the city, kept up at no small expense. It was towards sunset, and some little past Pentecost. The days were at their longest; but the sun had got through his long course, had thrown a bridge of glory across the western waters, and was, as Homer tells us, about to loose his steeds and to sup with Oceanus. Turning the corner where the old ash-tree now

is,—it was then in the very prime of beauty,—I came suddenly upon Theodora: she was walking slowly, and the tears were in her eyes.

“Don’t go,” I cried, for she was turning as if to hasten into the house; “don’t let me shorten your stroll. Dear Theodora, you are not happy. Is there anything that I can do for you? anything that I can ask my father or mother to do? you must know, you can hardly be in ignorance, how gladly I would serve you with my very life.”

She seemed to smile through her tears. “I have been making myself unhappy. I believe I have been very foolish. But I am so weary of these endless controversies. And it is not only that, but it seems as if I were alone, I cannot feel as the others do. And yet perhaps I am wrong to talk thus. You too may be listening to—to—; you may be disposed to think—”

“Listening to Arius! never, Theodora. If that is what you meant, never. I grieve more than I can tell you that my father is one of his followers. And as to Helladia—”

“I rejoice to hear you say so,” returned Theodora. “Rather than believe what Arius teaches,—Oh! Macarius, I would be in my grave!”

“And may I tell you,” I said, “how anxious I have been all this time, lest you, too, should be led away? You seemed as if you were avoiding me, and I fancied, I thought, that you saw what

I thought of Arius, and held aloof from me because I did think so."

"If you did but know," she said, "how thankful I am to hear you speak thus! I am not alone, then."

I could bear it no longer.

"Listen, Theodora," I said. "I had not intended to put my all on the cast this evening; but if I am to be miserable, as well now as at any other time,—better; for the longer I hope the more bitter will be my disappointment. Dearest Theodora! all my heart, all my love, all my hopes for the future, have long been with you; it rests with you what my future life shall be."

A hand is laid on my pen.

So it is not fair,—you dear wife, whom I love tenfold as much now in our old age as I did then, and that was no weak affection, as circumstances shewed,—so it is not fair to write down what you said? Well, well; so be it.

I will not tell you, then, how she answered my question. But, five minutes after I had asked it, oh into what perfect beauty that evening seemed transfigured! such a glorious hue on the sea, such peace and softness in the sky, I never knew before; never before did I so well understand the voice of the breeze among the leaves; never before did I feel, as well as see, the beauty of those summer flowers. We walked in the garden, saying little, but drinking in every sight and sound, and

transforming them into our own happiness, till the short twilight was at an end, and the stars began to look down on the great city.

“We ought to be going in,” said my Theodora. “You will tell your father, Macarius?”

“This very hour,” said I.

“I cannot help sometimes fancying,” she said, “that he might have other views for you, but yet—”

“But yet, (if he had, which I do not believe,) he is too kind a father, and he loved your father too well, to put any difficulty in the way now. I will tell my mother first, and then go to him. Meanwhile, good night ! if I see you again, it will only be amidst the rest.” And I gave her the first kiss. I little thought how many weary, weary days the remembrance of that would be all that I had to comfort me.

My mother was in the women’s apartment. Accustomed to have no secrets from her, I very soon told her all. She rejoiced, fully and heartily, in my joy. It was, she said, what she had ever wished. Theodora’s mother she had known and loved : Theodora herself had hitherto been almost—would now be quite—as dear as her own Heladia. But yet I saw a cloud on her brow.

“I think,” she said presently, “were I in your place, I would not mention this to your father to-night ; he has heard something which has much annoyed him.”

“Indeed!” said I. “What is it?”

“He has just heard that a synod has been called by the Bishop to enquire into the doctrine of Arius, and that the feeling of the clergy is very strong against him. Let us hope that all will be overruled for good; but to-night I would not speak to him on this matter; you know that he is sometimes a little hasty, and that, having once said a thing, even in haste, he thinks it a point of honour to keep to it.”

“I will follow your advice, dearest mother; but you will see Theodora at once, will you not?”

“This very second.”

“And I have to go down to the Quay for some papers.” Accordingly, I went forth. It was now getting quite dark, and I was rather astonished, on reaching our premises, to see a light in my father’s office, where the papers (they related to a contract with a house at Maiuma) had been left; and on getting to the door heard voices within. Arius was there with my father.

“Oh, it is you, is it?” said the latter; “have you heard the news?”

“About the synod?”

“Synod!” he vociferated; “don’t call it a synod;—clique; packed assembly; sham council. Shame on them! shame on them!”

“Nay, my dear friend,” began the soft voice of the Priest.

“You may bear it quietly,” said my father;

“I will not ; I will spend the last obolus I have, sooner than permit you to be rough-ridden by a faction like this.”

Arius had his eye upon me ; I felt it.

“Do not, Sir,” he said,—“do not give way to these strong expressions. I am bound, as a Christian priest, to remind you that to be persecuted for righteousness’ sake is the highest blessing :—is it not ?” And he looked half doubtfully, half invitingly at me.

“It is, indeed,” I said. And I doubted whether I might conscientiously leave off with that apparent agreement with him. However, Arius himself continued :—

“But perhaps, my young friend, you think that I have no right to so glorious a title ?”

“Nonsense, nonsense,” said my father ; “he thinks as I do—as we all do. Speak up, man, speak up ; don’t you abominate these underhand proceedings of our Bishop ?”

I scarcely knew how to answer. The question would have been a delicate one at any time, and much more now, when the dearer half of my thoughts were with Theodora.

“Indeed, my father,” I said, “I have heard nothing of the matter till I came here, except that there was to be a synod ; and therefore have had no opportunity of forming any judgment on it.”

“Well, then, I tell you now,” said my father.

“The Bishop is going to drag our friend here before a council, as he calls it, and try to convict him of heresy, merely to punish him for so nearly having succeeded—as I wish to God he had quite—in the election. *Now* what do you say?”

“My dear father,” I answered, “I am no theologian, and I hope that if any synod is held nothing but justice will be done. I can hardly think that our good Bishop would—”

“Would do as your father says?—So I am a liar, am I? a slanderer, am I? a robber of men’s characters, am I? I humbly beg your pardon, most learned Sir, for venturing to disagree with you.” Then, changing a bitterly sarcastic tone for one of violent passion,—“What do you mean, you rascal, to stand and contradict me thus?”

“Dear friend,” said Arius, “indeed, indeed, we must bear unjust suspicions. It will not be the first time by many that I have been called to endure them.”

“My dear father,” I said, as soon as my surprise allowed me to say anything, “indeed, indeed, I did not mean to annoy you; but—”

“To annoy me, Sir? you are speaking to me as if I were a baby. Go home, Sir, to your mother, and tell her that I am starting for Ptolemais this very evening. This shall not be a hole-and-corner meeting, if I can help it. I have some influence with the Bishop there, and will see what can be done.”

We had some business at Ptolemais which required the presence of a confidential clerk, and one was to have been despatched next morning.

"To Ptolemais!" I said: "then Neorus will not go, I suppose?"

"What's that to you, Sir?—Yes, he will go with me. Be off with you, and tell your mother what I say; and bid her send me down the wearing apparel I shall need, at once; I shall start with the first break of day."

"May I not bring it down myself, Sir?"

"I shall be obliged to you, Sir, to do what I tell you, and nothing more."

"And when, my father, may we expect you home?"

"To the crows with you!" said he: "be off."

And, shocked to the very heart, I went. I knew that my father's temper was very hasty, but I had never seen him so excited as he was that evening. Just as I left our office I met Athanasius.

"A good evening to you," said the Deacon; "I was searching for you."

"Well met," said I; "walk towards home with me, for my business is urgent, and perhaps you can explain what I cannot understand."

I told him all that had happened.

"I fear," he said, "that matters are very serious. There is not the least doubt that Arius will be excommunicated unless he recants, and

how little likely that is, you know better than I do."

"Have you heard more, then?"

"Much more of his teaching. It seems that he plainly and in so many words says that our ever-blessed Lord is a mere man; excellent, indeed, above other men, begotten miraculously of the Holy Ghost, and now endued with all that the Godhead can bestow on a creature, but a man still. And of this you may be sure, that it is simply his rivalry with our good Bishop which has prevented the council from being summoned before."

I proceeded to tell Athanasius my own success with Theodora, and received his warm congratulations.

"And do not be uneasy," said he, "about your father. When a synod has once spoken, all those who are in earnest sons of the Church will at once give in; and annoyed though he may be at first,—very naturally, too, considering the relation in which Arius stands to your family,—he will soon come round. I am glad that your betrothed one remains firm to the truth."

His words much comforted me; and I gave the message with which I was charged to my mother, telling her, at the same time, something of what I had heard.

"You see," she said, "that my advice was good. I cannot tell what it is that thus irritates .

your father. Arius is, I know, held by him in the highest esteem, but so was the Bishop too. It is very strange. Call Ammon, and he shall carry down the bundle to the Quay."

However hard I tried to keep up my spirits during the week that ensued, I confess it passed very heavily. My mother thought—and poor Theodora agreed with her—that as the latter was my father's ward, and he had not yet approved of her engagement, nothing further ought to pass between her and myself till his return. I saw, then, but little of her, and that little only in the presence of others. On the Sabbath, Arius preached to a large congregation in the Baucalis, but entirely composed of his own adherents, for the parochial division was fairly broken up in the closer attraction of party ties. On the Lord's day, the Lybian bishop, Theonas, preached; he had come up for the synod, which was convened for the Wednesday; and his doctrine, I thought, was even more heterodox—at all events, it was more plainly expressed—than that of Arius himself.

CHAPTER III.

Arius is condemned in the Synod.—Theonas forbids his son, while retaining his actual belief, to think further of Theodora.

ON the Tuesday evening, as we were waiting for the late supper which my father had ordered to

be prepared for him, our slave Ammon ran in with the news that he was coming up the street. Accordingly, there was the flashing of torches and the tramp of horses, and in another minute my father alighted at his door. He seemed in an excellent humour, and also improved, by the change, in his health.

“Run to the lodgings of Arius,” he said; “quick, Ammon! tell him that I have returned, and ask him to do me the honour of supping with me. Tell him I have important news. Well, my boy, and how are you? Well?—That’s well; all going on prosperously? Where is your mother? Come in, fellows; the servants will find something for you.”

And so chatting, he entered the house, and sought my mother. I should at once have mentioned to him the subject that was uppermost in my mind; but, as Arius was invited, it seemed better to defer it to the morrow. The Priest (who, it struck me, had expected the message,) very soon came, and presently after we all sat down to supper.

“Great improvements at Ptolemais,” said my father, as he was eating a very fine rhombus, with sauce of Thasian wine,—a favourite dish of his. “That new agora they have been talking of so long is half finished; it will soon be a very important place. And how wags the world here, Sir? at what time to-morrow does the synod meet?”

“At the fourth hour,” replied Arius. “I have been formally summoned.”

My sister looked at him with those great earnest eyes of hers, but said nothing.

“It is simply diocesan, still—”

“Simply diocesan,” returned Arius. “My dear friend the Bishop of Ptolemais is kind enough to be with me, but he will neither vote nor speak in the synod.”

“And, fairly, now,” asked my mother, “what do you think will be the result?”

Arius smiled his own beautiful smile: “I shall be excommunicated. But God has His own instruments for carrying on the spread of the truth.”

“Impossible!” cried my father, striking the table heavily.

“You will see,” said the Priest, “that I am right. Come, my child,” for Helladia’s tears could no longer be restrained, “if you believe the Gospel, there is not much to lament in that. Truth will prevail at last.”

“But if the case be so,” said the poor child, very timidly, “that you are—that you are—”

“That I am excommunicated,—well?”

“What shall you do?”

“My dear Helladia,” said my father, “you may ask questions that our dear friend may not think it right to answer.”

“But I can have no objection to answer this. I shall appeal to a national council: God may

suffer His preachers to be crushed, but not His truth. I feel that He has called me to defend the breach now, and here; and if it be necessary to appeal to a general council of all bishops, I for one will not be found wanting to my duty."

I did not wonder, as he spoke, at the influence which this man had acquired. His words were so gentle, and yet so firmly spoken; he seemed so convinced that the cause of God lay on him, and woe were to him if he maintained it not, that it was almost impossible not to believe him. Indeed, I feel persuaded that had it not been for my constant association with Athanasius and Mennas, I myself should have been carried away with the tide.

"But we must not make the case out worse than it is," he continued, cheerfully; "several of the parish priests are strongly on my side. There is my namesake, you know; there is Aithalas, there is Achillas."

"You mean the cardinal priest at St. Theonas."

"The same :—Carponas and Sarmates; that is, we stand six and six, so far as the parish priests of this city are concerned."

"But, you say, that is not the case in the diocese generally?"

"By no means; *there* we form a small minority."

"I shall surely be there to-morrow," said my father. "Macarius, I expect you to attend me."

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“With all my heart, Sir.”

“And any one, my dear friend, whom you may like to bring back to supper to-morrow when the proceedings are over, you know how much pleasure it will give me to see them.”

“And me too, Sir?” asked Arius, with a smile.

“Most surely; why do you ask?”

“What! even if I am excommunicated?”

“By *the*^e,” said my father, (it was the nearest approach to an oath in which he allowed himself,) “all the more welcome in that case, because then there will be more pleasure in standing by a persecuted friend.”

So passed the supper on.—My Glycerium, I see a question in that earnest little face,—what is it?

Whether Arius was acting the hypocrite, or defending what he believed the truth?

I will tell you without any doubt. I am sure that he was defending what he believed the truth. It was impossible to be with him day by day, to see how abstemious and holy a life he led, how gentle he was, how kind to the poor, how earnest in prayer, and come to any other conclusion. But I believe that, unawares to himself, he was eaten up with the lust of power; it tainted and defiled everything, and brought him at length to—well, to what he became.

When supper was over, he bade us good-night,

remarking that he should be engaged previously to the council, and being reminded by my father that we should sup at the second hour of the night. Then Helladia besought and urged my mother to let her attend also. She was at first very unwilling; but at length, when convinced that other ladies would be present, and that the women's gallery would be open to them, she consented, only stipulating that Ammonarium should attend her.

My father proposed going to bed early, being weary with his journey; but he bade me go down, first thing in the morning, to the Quay, to learn if any news had come in of the tunny fishing. A few days before we had received intelligence from our agent at Melita that the sea was troubled and dark as with a whole shoal of tunnies^f. And as a great part of our business lay in the tunny agency, the earliest information was desirable.

I was annoyed at this, for it seemed to put off my chance of speaking to my father at a greater distance than ever. However, there was nothing to be done but to submit with a good grace. It was a very lovely summer morning: Alexandria, the lady of merchant cities, awoke to her gains and her merchandize, but still it was evident that

^f The expression in my MS. is: φρίκη σκιερὰν κατὰ μέρος τὴν θάλατταν ἀνεκίρυντεν ὁ σκοπιούργος ὡς πλήθους ὕλου προσιόντος θύννων ἢ πηλαμίδων. The πηλαμίδς is a sort of tunny, and is called in the Marseilles market, to this very day, *palamyde*.

a great deal of excitement prevailed. The word *synod* I heard repeated several times before I got down to the wharf; and when I had satisfied myself that no intelligence had been received, nor was likely to be, the wind setting from the north-east, I was hurrying back, when the head clerk and the chief wharfinger requested a holiday, in order to attend the council. They were both active partizans of Arius, and, as I had no doubt what my father's feelings would be on the subject, I gave them leave. This involved some conversation with them, and the wharfinger was good enough to detail at great length his sentiments on the controversy, till I was compelled to remind him that my presence was necessary at home.

Returning there, and determined now at last to speak of my love to my Theodora, I found that Arius—not the celebrated man, but his namesake—and Carponas were with my father. I did not know then what their business might be; I soon found it out, as you shall hear, to my cost. I remember thinking this Arius a very disagreeable man. Stumpy and short, with a head too big for his height, and set rather on one side, a tongue that did not seem to fit into his mouth, a watery, unpleasant eye, and coarse white hair, like the locks of a mangy*sheep. He was said to be a great intriguer, but not to make any pretension to eloquence. Carponas was a young man, very gentlemanly, and of one of the first families in

Alexandria; more like a courtier, however, than a priest. They did not go till the fourth hour, and then I found that I must defer my intended communication till the synod should be over.

My father, Helladia, and I walked together; Ammonarium and the slave Xanthias followed behind. The synod was to be held—which I think I have not yet said—in the diocesan church of St. Mark; and as we drew nearer to the great square, we observed a considerable flow of people in the same direction. Arius had promised that good places should be preserved for my father and for myself; Ammonarium and my sister would, of course, be in the women's gallery. Leaving her at the entrance to the staircase, we forced our way in through the narthex, where was a motley crowd of pagans and Christians; several persons, whom we knew to be Meletians, were there. Athanasius had already told me that the Meletians were making common cause with Arius. On the present occasion the holy doors were closed, and the bema was not used. A kind of throne was erected for the Bishop on this side the screen, and, in the very middle of the building, was placed a kind of desk, with a gorgeous copy of the New Testament opened thereon, symbolizing the presence of the Lord in the assembly of the saints. To the right and left of the Bishop, down the nave, but within the pillars, were benches for the priests, covered with scarlet cloth. A kind of palisade was erected

behind these, from pier to pier, serving the double purpose of keeping off the crowd and affording a back for the sitters to lean against. Beyond the benches, towards the end of the nave, was a place for the deacons, who were to stand; and still beyond them, just within the narthex, was a strong body of parabolani, to preserve order.

There was a good deal of talking, though in a low voice, as my father and I pushed our way through the aisle to a place which had been reserved for us close to the fence, and just behind one of the benches for the cardinal priests: these sat nearest to the Bishop, six on the left, six on the right. It was easy to see that the feeling of the spectators was against Arius, and observations were once or twice made close to us, which I could perceive nettled my father a good deal. But now the holy doors were thrown open: deacons, priests, and, last of all, the Bishop, take their places; and Alexander—I see the old man now, so gentle, so loving, so altogether bright—recites, in his clear, silvery voice, the prayers appointed for the occasion.

My children, I am not about to dwell at length on the proceedings of that synod, because I have to speak, in process of time, of so much more famous an assembly. Arius spoke; and how beautifully, so far as language went, he did speak! But he enveloped his meaning in so many and curious expressions, threw such wordiness over all that he

taught, employed Scriptural language in so singular a way, that it was difficult even for an educated mind to follow him. By the side of the Bishop stood the Deacon Athanasius; and of a verity he was mighty in the Scriptures! Not picking this text, and choosing that, but, as it were, with a glance taking in the whole teaching of the Holy Ghost.

“You may condemn me if you will,” said Arius, “the truth has for a while been trampled down before now; but in condemning me you condemn him whom other Churches beside our own have gloried in calling the Great; him whose name we thankfully recite in the diptychs, and whose works are as household words in our studies; you will condemn Dionysius, the blessed pope of the evangelical see, all but a martyr, and the first of confessors.”

“The memory of Dionysius is blessed!” shouted one.

“Dionysius is with the saints!” roared another.

“Dionysius and Alexander teach alike!” exclaimed a third.

“The memory of Dionysius is indeed blessed,” said Arius; “Dionysius is indeed, if ever mortal man were, with the saints; but Dionysius and Alexander do *not* teach the same. Alexander says that the Begetter and the Begotten are one.”

“We all say so!” shouted the crowd.

“Alexander affirms that the Begotten is of the same substance with the Begetter.”

“We all affirm it!” vociferated the multitude. But I thought that the Bishop looked to Athanasius, as if doubting whether the expression, “of the same substance,” was to be absolutely and at all events retained. A few words from the brave Deacon seemed to compose him.

“Well, then, thus says Dionysius,—listen: ‘The Son of God is made and produced; He is not proper in His nature, but differing in essence from the Father, as the vine from the husbandman, or the boat from the builder; for, seeing that He was made, He was not before He was produced.’”

Then arose a clamour such as I cannot describe. “Out with the heretic!” roared the rabble again. “Cut him in twain!” “As he divides, so let him be divided!” “Arius is a second Noetus!” And the speaker’s friends shouted, “Bravo! bravo!” “Arius a second Peter!” “Arius another Paul!” “Dionysius and Arius think alike!”

When silence was re-established, Athanasius rose. “It is true,” said he, “that Dionysius used those expressions; but, Arius, why do you not add that he afterwards apologized for them?”

A second outburst of clamour; then the Deacon proceeded:—

“I do not defend them, though I believe him to have been speaking of the Lord’s human nature; but thus he expressed himself to his namesake,

Dionysius of Rome, also among the saints.” And he read the passage §.

This seemed to stir up more confusion than before; and for two hours there was a sharp contest between Athanasius and Arius. At length Mennas, from among the deacons, said, “Have I your Paternity’s leave to ask Arius a question?”

“Ask it, my son.”

“Then, Arius, listen, and answer directly, yes or no. Satan, being an archangel, was tempted and fell: could he, if he would, have stood?”

“Certainly he could.”

“Was not our Lord tempted in the wilderness?”

“He was.”

“Could He have fallen?”

A dead pause. All held their breath. No reply.

“Arius, could the Lord Jesus have fallen as Satan fell?”

In a clear, low voice, that thrilled through the whole church, Arius said, “HE COULD.”

Alexander stood up, and his standing hushed the rising tumult.

“Men and brethren, it is enough. Is it your will that Arius, who has said, ‘The Lord Jesus can fall, as Satan fell,’ should be delivered over to an anathema to the destruction of the flesh,

§ And would that Macarius had copied that passage! For that epistle has perished, and the Church never sustained a greater loss.—TRANSLATOR.

that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord's coming?"

A shriek in the gallery—a woman carried out.

An overpowering clamour of "Yes!"

"I demand that the numbers be taken," said Carponas.

"They shall be," returned Alexander. "Euzoïus, you shall count them that say 'No;' Athanasius, you shall reckon such as have shouted 'Aye.'"

They divided right and left of the Gospel. The names were given in.

"Men and brethren," said Alexander, "they that would deliver over Arius, saying that the Lord Jesus could fall as Satan fell, to an anathema, are thirty-six priests and forty-four deacons; in all, eighty. They that say 'No,' are five priests and five deacons; in all, ten."

Though it is certain that Arius fully expected to be condemned, and that by a large majority, he expected no such all but universal sentence as this: eight voices out of nine! I think that, for the moment, it even staggered my father; and I hoped that it would lead him to see how far he had wandered from the faith. The synod broke up, and then we found that the disturbance in the gallery had been occasioned by the fainting of Helladia, just at the moment when the final sentence was about to be pronounced. She had been given into the charge of the deaconesses, and was now able to accompany us home. Every one

attributed the immense majority to the decisive question put by Mennas, and I thought at the time that he could hardly have more effectually injured his cause with my sister than in thus prominently coming forward against Arius.

But little was spoken as we walked back. My father merely said, "Some steps must be taken with reference to this matter," and then seemed to give himself up to his own thoughts. Helladia said nothing, but that the air was very sultry.

I now see that I should have done more wisely had I deferred my question till a better opportunity; but I was impatient till I had got over the necessary explanation with my father. As soon as we had reached our house he desired me to go down with him to the Quay, and on the road thither I told him.

"This," he said, calmly, "is not altogether unexpected to me, and certainly, in many respects, not displeasing; but before I can positively say yes or no, several things have to be settled. I have little doubt that I shall be able to comply with your wishes, but the whole subject must be deferred for three or four days."

"Oh my father!"

"For three or four days," repeated my father, still more gravely; "and you must give me your promise that, till then, you will have no conversation with my ward which all the world might not hear."

"At all events, may I not tell her what you have now said?"

"No," he replied; "I will do that myself."

"You will not forget? for I know how anxious she must be."

"I am not accustomed to have my word called in question," was the reply. "You will remember that the invoices to Potamiænus at Rhinocorura have to be made out before nightfall."

So for two hours I was engaged in entries of tunnies and palamydes, of salted rhombi, and neats' tongues. And truly glad was I when, as old Homer says, "The sun set, and all ways were shaded."

The four days passed, as all four days must do. Arius was constantly at our house, though I saw but little of him. Once or twice the Bishop of Ptolemais called, and Carponas and the other Arius seemed busily employed on certain papers and lists of names. On the fourth evening my father sent for me into his own apartment. A parchment lay on the table before him, of which I could only see that the heading commenced, "To Constantine, Emperor, Pious, Pacific, Victor, Ever-Augustus."

"This paper," said my father, "is a representation to the Augustus of the great unfairness evinced by the late synod, carried away by the foolish question of an ignorant young man."

"Do you mean Mennas, Sir?"

"Whom else should I mean? To him I shall have somewhat more to say presently. To you I have but to say this, that it is my desire you sign this document at once."

I cast my eye over it. It besought the Augustus to take pity on a man unjustly condemned, and to give orders to Alexander to receive Arius into his communion again; and, if he refused, then to desire the Archbishop of Constantinople or the Patriarch of Antioch to do so in his stead.

"Well, Sir?" said my father, seeing that I hesitated.

"My dear father, I would do anything in my power, and that was not against my conscience, to please you—"

"But you will not sign this, eh? Am I right?"

"Say rather, I cannot sign it."

"Your reasons?"

"In the first place, my father, because I do not think that he was unjustly condemned; and if he were, I do not think that the Emperor has any power to reverse the decrees of a synod. And you know, Arius himself said that he should appeal to a national council if he were condemned by this."

"He has already done so," said my father, "and Alexander will shortly issue his letter of convocation for one. Much good may it do him! I have lived long enough to see that these bishops all tread in one and the same track; it is tradition, tradition for ever; no room for one word of

common sense: the Emperor will be worth a hundred synods.—So you will not sign this?”

“If I did, surely my name would carry no weight: but I cannot: please, my dear father, do not ask it of me.”

“You are right enough,” he returned, “your name would carry no weight—with those that know you,—but I had my reasons, nevertheless, for wishing you to attach your signature. Very well. Macarius, listen: you are aware of the power I have by her father’s will over Theodora?”

“I am not quite sure,” said I, for my heart began to misgive me terribly.

“She is not to marry till she is five-and-twenty without my permission; after that time, she may marry indeed to whom she will, but her property, if she marry contrary to my liking, goes from her in a way pointed out by the will; it matters not to you how.”

“I understand.”

“Understand, then, this further: if you refuse to sign the document, I refuse my sanction to her marrying you. She is now just eighteen; for seven years I can absolutely prevent it. If, after that time, you choose to take her, you take a penniless bride, and she a penniless bridegroom; for, by *the*, not an obolus shall you in that case have from me.”

You may fancy how I adjured, entreated, fell on my knees; what a sore trial it was to me not to

sign; how Athanasius alone kept me back from doing as my father wished. Thanks be to God, I held firm. The document was despatched in due time; but my father assured me that, as numberless more memorials of a similar nature would be sent to Constantinople, whenever I chose to attach my name to one of them he would take my case into consideration again.

CHAPTER IV.

Theodora and Mennas go to Rome.—Arius is anathematized in a National Council.—The heresy spreads everywhere.—Hosius visits Alexandria.

I MUST now rapidly hurry over the events of some considerable time.

Poor Theodora! One interview we had, in the chamber of my mother, who, though she blamed my obstinacy, regretted my father's hard-heartedness. It was a short one, but it gave me great comfort.

"My word is pledged to you," she said: "if it please God to spare us both, and you then care to claim a poor and not a youthful bride, I am yours at the expiration of the seven years."

"Ah, dearest! I love you as much as Jacob did Rachel, but they will never seem to me a few days."

"You have done your duty," she said. "Had you bought me at the price of that paper, what peace

could we either of us have expected? it would have been denying Him who ought to be dearer to each of us than we are the one to the other."

"You are right, I know, my Theodora. But it is a hard trial."

And so we talked, till my mother, fearful of her husband's anger should he discover that she had permitted the interview, hurried Theodora away. It seemed to me as if now the battle of life were beginning, and I was left in the world alone.

Next, Mennas received his dismissal, but not from my father.

Helladia asked me to beg him to see her; I guessed why, but she would not answer a question that I put, and I could only give her message to my friend.

That evening he called on me at the Quay, and seemed ten years older than he had been in the morning.

"It is all over, Macarius," he said; "my trial is heavier than yours."

"Then it is so! she has broken off your engagement!"

"Yes—but so scornfully, so bitterly! That I was currying favour with the Bishop; eager to ingratiate myself with the great majority of ecclesiastics; willing to trample on one who was down; an admirable calculator of times and seasons! Macarius, I could not have believed that she had such bitterness in her. And the time has been that—"

And the strong man laid his head in his arms upon the table, and sobbed aloud.

I said what I could to comfort him—but how little was that!

“I cannot bear,” he continued presently, “to remain in Alexandria; I have requested leave of my Bishop to continue my studies in Rome, and he has given me a most kind systatic to the Bishop Silvester.”

“In Rome!” said I: “why, Theodora is going there for the present also.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, she has an aunt there; and my father sees that either she or I must leave Alexandria. Me he cannot spare, therefore she must go.”

And thus it was settled. My father had a ship about to sail to the Port, and though the captain was a highly respectable man, he was very glad to be able to commit his ward to such good keeping as that of Mennas. After his first burst of passion was over, I think he grieved both for Mennas and myself; and anything, except retreating from his word, which he could do for my comfort, he was only too glad to take in hand.

At the end of summer, then, they sailed, and for many months—. But more of that presently. I must now tell you how affairs went on at Alexandria.

Of course, at the conclusion of the synod a direct schism broke out. Arius refused to consider the excommunication valid. He celebrated

the holy mysteries, and preached, before a larger congregation than ever, at the Baucalis on the following Lord's day; and the other cardinal priests took every opportunity of communicating with him, and making common cause with his. Alexander summoned a council of all Egypt; a hundred bishops met. Arius was again excommunicated, and so were those who had communicated or should communicate with him. I had, since the diocesan synod, told my father that I must obey God rather than man; and, without any great opposition on his part, had attended at St. Theonas', where my friend Athanasius was the proto-deacon.

By the second synod, then, my father was cut off from the Church. A stricter prelate than Alexander might have forbidden my residing in his house; but, after some conversation with me on the subject, he advised my continuing to do so, and watching every opportunity I could of inducing him to listen to the truth. To do my mother justice, she would, if left to herself, have returned to the Church after the national council; but my father's will and Arius' reasonings were too much for her. But I shall never forget how shocked she was when at the Baucalis the ancient doxology was altered into "Glory to the Father, by the Son, through the Holy Ghost." My sister, too, at first appeared frightened; though at length she learnt to rejoice that the truth, as she termed it, should be so boldly displayed and unflinchingly taught. Thus ended the first year.

And now Arius began to extend his influence at Constantinople and in Palestine: while Eusebius of Nicomedia, all-influential with the Emperor, openly espoused his part. My father's house became the head-quarters of the sect, and the adulation and flattery he received from them naturally rendered him more opinionated and domineering. His time was so much taken up with theological disputes, that the business of the house well-nigh rested on me. With God's blessing on my endeavours, it had never been so flourishing. I often heard from Mennas, my mother occasionally from Theodora.

Then followed the interference of the Emperor; his letter to Alexander and Arius, which equally irritated both. He treated the question as a mere logomachy, and desired both parties to make peace. My father was at first disposed to agree with him; but Arius had the best of the argument. "I call Alexander," he said, "an idolater; he calls me a heretic; and each, according to his own views, is right. The Emperor esteems this a question of no importance, whether Jesus of Nazareth is God of God, or pure man. Truly I had rather teach as Alexander than as Constantine."

In this same year my sister took, under Arius, the vow of perpetual chastity, and the dress. She joined no religious community, for such things were then hardly formed for women, and lived among us as before. The Priest had induced

some thirty or forty to take the same vow, and it proves how much influence he had over my father, that no serious objection was made to the step.

Then I remember the visit of the Spanish Bishop, Hosius of Cordova, who was commissioned to reconcile the dispute, but who became the strongest and warmest friend of Alexander. The whole world was now devastated by this schism. We heard of it from Mennas at Rome; in Constantinople the heresy was rampant; in Egypt multitudes fell away. For such a disease what could be the remedy?

CHAPTER V.

Macarius receives directions from his father to go into Bithynia.—A large commission is given by the Emperor to the House at the Quay of the Dioscuri.

THUS passed more than four years away. My father had aged a good deal, but still seemed hale and happy. My mother, I could see, was less satisfied with her position. She did not complain; but as old friends passed her in the street without salutation; as her parties became more and more confined either to mere Artotrogi^h, Curculiones, and Stasimi, or to the heads of the Arian sect, whose talk was of nothing but

^h Parasites in the New Comedy.—TRANSL.

memorials, and synods, and lists of bishops, and influence, and the whole organization of a polemical partizanship, you may imagine that I had as little to do with these parties as I possibly could, but it was not possible entirely to avoid them.

One morning in very early spring, Paulinus and Julianus consulsⁱ, the swallows were gaily twittering in the eaves of our quay-houses; from the window by which I was writing I could see the ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα of the blue Mediterranean, and the cloud-shadows that, like playful kids, chased each other over the dimpling waves. My father was, as he was two days out of three, engaged at some meeting of the party, and I was carrying on the business of the firm. I noticed that a Byzantium-built *cercurus* had entered the harbour, but the thing had made no impression on my mind, when one of the wharfingers, with a preliminary knock at my door, entered with a large parcel.

I saw at once, from the ink and the seal, that it was a government order, and that it was marked "Immediate." I therefore despatched one of the under clerks to my father, with directions to report what had occurred—he was then at the Baucalis—and continued the work I had in hand.

My father soon made his appearance, opened the package, read its contents, and then said: "This is important in all respects. The Emperor has

ⁱ i.e. A.D. 325.

resolved to convoke an assembly of all the bishops of the Church to Nicæa in Bithynia, in order that the question of Christ's proper divinity may be settled for ever. We are summoned, as one of the royal purveying firms, to send in our share of provisions for the enormous concourse that is expected; and I think it will be desirable that we should both go."

My eyes, I suppose, brightened at the intelligence.

"You seem delighted," said my father, not unkindly.

"I am naturally pleased to have the chance of seeing an assembly that must be so remarkable, and of hearing the debates."

"The Emperor, too," referring to the letter again, "means to be there. The synod is summoned for the week after Pentecost; so we shall have enough to do. Here is the list."

That list, my children, would not edify you; but it for the time entirely occupied our thoughts. The greatest delicacies, such as *assafœtida*, were ordered in the most princely profusion; and of fish—for our house had its chief reputation in fish purveying—the varieties were endless. My father rubbed his hands: he was not an avaricious man, but what merchant would not rejoice at a boundless order with an imperial treasury for guarantee of payment?

As soon as I could make my escape I hurried

to Athanasius, who resided near St. Theonas'. He had just heard the news from his Bishop, who had received the imperial summons by the same *cercurus* that had brought us our order.

"A most important resolution," he said; "God only knows how important. We shall meet, then, at Nicæa."

"You go?"

"The Bishop has commanded me to accompany him. I have, you know, given much time to the study of this controversy, and he thinks that I may be useful to him."

I did indeed know that, comparatively young though he were, he had won for himself the reputation of being the first controversialist on the Catholic, i. e. the true and orthodox side, and that he was, and had long been, the mainspring of all Alexander's movements.

"I have my preparations to make," he said, smiling, "as well as you. We are continually pressed with that passage of Dionysius which Arius is so fond of quoting: I think you heard it at the first council. I have been engaged in investigating what really were the sentiments of that ever-illustrious Bishop; and here," he continued, laying his hand on a large number of parchments, "is a collection which, if ever I shall find time to publish it, will be valuable to me."

My father, as I soon found, was engaged to travel in company with Arius himself, the Bishop

of Ptolemais, and another Lybian Bishop, also of the same party. I was determined not to journey with these persons, and, as it fortunately happened, circumstances kept me behind. I have already told you that one of the principal branches of our business was the tunny agency at Melita; and as the house with which we corresponded there was this year unusually late in forwarding their fish, my father, of his own accord, proposed to me to stay behind until that business was settled. It was necessary that he should be at Nicæa before the bishops could arrive, inasmuch as the officers whom the Augustus had appointed over the general arrangements were to meet there at the beginning of May.

The last two or three years had made a wonderful difference in Arius himself. His hair was now quite grey; his forehead was wrinkled; he had become, from the middle-aged, the elderly man. Helladia, too, seemed anxious and unhappy; I could not but imagine sometimes that her trust in her guide was weakened. It was, at all events, a miserable thing to see my family, on the Sabbath and on the Lord's day, setting out to the house which Arius had hired as a place of worship, when the Baucalis had, after a long struggle, been taken away from him. He left as his representative in Alexandria that Euzoïus, now a priest, who, as you may remember, was one of those who counted the numbers at the first synod. My sister was,

of course, to remain at home; my mother had been somewhat anxious to accompany my father into Bithynia, but her wishes were then, as they were generally, overruled.

I have nothing particular to tell you of my journey from Alexandria. I took the opportunity of one of our vessels that was sailing for Byzantium, and from thence travelled overland to Nicæa.

It was a glorious evening, rather past the middle of June, when I gained the top of the hill which overlooks the now famous city of Nicæa. High above the other buildings rose the great dome of the Church of the Eternal Wisdom; to its right and left were the half-ruinous porticoes, but yet beautiful in their ruin, of the temples of Victory, and Juno, and Apollo. There seemed an unusual concourse of the inhabitants of the neighbouring country into the town itself: farmers driving in their sheep, calves, or swine; peasants with their cart or barrowfuls of vegetables and fruit; the barley harvest finishing in the fields around, and the golden promise of the wheat everywhere glorious.

I was riding on a mule, a guide accompanying me on another, and a sumpter-mule carrying my luggage. We stopped to enquire of a man who was mending the road the way to the street of St. Irene.

“You are strangers, are you?” said he; “a pity that you were not here this time yesterday.”

“Why, my good friend?”

“Why? because the Augustus himself made his entry then. The bishops, and prætors, and officers, and great men came out to meet him pretty nigh as far as where you are standing now: there was never such a crowd seen at Nicæa before. One thing you may be sure of; if you have not ordered your lodgings, you will go without any.”

“I am quite easy about that,” said I; “but what? the first turn to the right is it, when we have passed the Great Church?”

“Aye, aye,” said the man, and continued his work.

As we drew nearer to the gates it was very easy to see that something unusual was going on in the city. Venerable old men, in dresses strange to an Egyptian eye, speaking outlandish tongues, were strolling out by twos, threes, and fours. Here and there we met a younger and merrier group, apparently in attendance on the court; ever and anon a single priest or bishop would pass us, busily studying some document; and as we reached the great gate we found that the guards were doubled, and a strict watch kept over all strangers. Being well furnished with recommendations from the Augustal præfect, I was not detained very long. And then I began to see how crowded the city was, not only with ecclesiastics, and others immediately connected with the council, but with

the followers of the court, though Constantine, I understood, had curtailed its numbers as far as possible. He lodged in a palace near the episcopal house. Theognius, the bishop of the see, was one of those prelates on whom Arius had the fullest dependence.

I again enquired the way to the house where I had been directed, and was just setting out once more, when I saw my father walking with some ecclesiastics on the opposite side of the road. I crossed, and instantly recognised Secundus of Ptolemais.

"I began to fear that something had delayed you," said my father, who seemed really delighted to see me; "has anything been the matter? How are you yourself, and what news do you bring from Alexandria?"

I satisfied him to the best of my ability, and then, in turn, heard all the news that had to be told. It was reported that the number of bishops present was between three and four hundred; one from India, one from Gaul, and they say that there was even a priest from that barbarous island called Britain. They were all lodged at the Emperor's expense, a table being provided for them by six, or eight, or more, according to the number received in each house. I heard, too, of sermons preached everywhere; for the most part, my father said, mere trash, utter trumpery; Balaam's ass, he told me, brayed much better;

whereby I gathered that here, as elsewhere, the majority was strong against Arius.

My father's lodging was over a cutler's; one of our clerks was with him; but Arius, with the Egyptian bishops, was, to my great joy, accommodated some distance off. At this same cutler's I found that Aaron was also lodged: this was the priest of whom I just now spoke as coming from Britain. Afterwards I saw much of him, and he told me of that savage country. It appears that there are in the island three bishops, one at York, one at Caerleon, and one at a place called London. He is in a manner commissioned by these bishops to speak for them; and here he, and another priest from the borders of China, both came to testify to the same doctrine. So widely is the Church of God spread abroad through the world.

CHAPTER VI.

Athanasius and Macarius walk through Nicæa.—Athanasius meets many friends.

EARLY the next morning Athanasius waited upon me. "I rejoice," he said, "with all my heart, that you are here. This, indeed, will be a glorious assembly, such a synod as has not been since that first council of the Apostles. O Macarius, how comforting is it to believe in our

Lord's own words, 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it!'

To speak to Athanasius after my long and weary calculations about palamydes, tunnies, neats' tongues, and the like, was like rising into a purer and nobler atmosphere. I had partly known beforehand how, in this great crisis of the Church, the whole weight of her affairs pressed on the young deacon's shoulders; but when I now saw for the first time how he was saluted by almost every other stranger that he met in the street, how with each he seemed to have his own separate confidence, how he took and gave papers and lists, how many appointments he made or ratified, I could not but wonder at the physical strength, no less than the mental power, which could go through such continual fatigue, and bear up against a pressure which seemed almost too much for mortal. Thus we met an old man just as I left the cutler's, quite stooping with age, his eye apparently dim, but with a glance still remaining that shewed what it once must have been. He stopped, and Athanasius saluted him with great reverence.

"Well met," he said, "my son; I was about to seek you at your lodgings. Here are the acts of our own little council; they are signed, you will see, by three bishops besides myself. If you think them likely to be of service to your Bishop, my worthy brother in Christ, take them to him."

“He will be much beholden to your Holiness,” said the Deacon ; “he had already heard some particulars of the council from his Holiness Hosius, while he was at Alexandria.”

“Ah ! Hosius is a good man, Hosius is a good man,” said the stranger. “This afternoon, I hear, is our first session.”

“It is so, Holy Father.”

“God be with you, my son ;” and he passed on.

“Who is that ?” asked I, as we continued our walk.

“That is Spiridion of Tremithus, in the island of Cyprus : you must have heard of him ?”

“Not that I remember.”

“Ah ! this time brings men out who would otherwise have served God in their own little sphere, and would never have been heard of till the great day. However, they tell rather a good story about this same synod. I had it from Hosius : it had made him smile. At the opening of the council they had requested the last made bishop to preach. He was a young man, and had great ideas of his own eloquence. He had occasion to quote that saying of our Lord, ‘Arise, take up thy bed, and walk ;’ but when he came to the word ‘bed,’—Triphyllius, as I remember, was the man’s name,—he said *skimpous* instead of *krabbaton*. Well, this passed for once ; but when he quoted the text again, and *skimpous* came out the second time, our friend could bear

it no longer. 'What,' he called out, 'are you better than He who said *krabbaton*, that you are ashamed to use His words?' I should fancy that poor Triphyllius, who piqued himself on his elegant language, was put to great confusion."

As we passed the ruined portico of Apollo, an elderly man, in the philosopher's cloak which most of the bishops wore, was looking up at the jackdaws, which were flying round the Corinthian capitals, where they had built their nests. He turned round as we came up, and I observed that he held his hands out from his sides, as if he had no power over them.

"A pleasant sight this, good Athanasius," said he. "Those jackdaws praise God after their fashion, I dare say."

"I have no doubt of it, my father; better than He was once praised in this very place."

"Aye, indeed, it is a day I little thought, once on a time, to see. Give me my staff, will you? it got out of my hold a minute ago. That is it—there. I hold it with my arm. We meet in the afternoon."

"A glorious Bishop is that," said the Deacon.

"Who is he, and how did he lose the use of his hands?"

"That is Paul of Neocæsarea," said my companion; "they ran red-hot knitting-needles through his hands in the persecution of Licinius, and in some way it affected the tendons, so that the

physicians say he can never have the use of his fingers again. Look, look ! here comes a very different character."

We met a personage dressed in the height of the fashion, and apparently about fifty, with a handsome but somewhat bloated countenance, a very scornful expression, and a gait as if it were rather a condescension to walk upon the earth. He was something above the middle height ; on his shoes he wore a golden ornament ; his toga was singularly rich ; behind him came two ecclesiastics, and behind them, again, four slaves. He cast a sort of proud glance at Athanasius, but vouchsafed not the slightest return to his salutation.

"Eusebius of Nicomedia," whispered he, when he had passed. "If matters go wrong, it will be through that man. I wish I had half the zeal for God that he has for his own advancement. I have no doubt that he is going to the Emperor now ; you know how great a favourite he is."

"What a singular costume !" I observed, as we met another ecclesiastic, who wore indeed a kind of cloak, but different from anything I had ever seen.

"I have not been introduced to him yet," said the Deacon ; "but I know him by sight. He is a Gaulish bishop, his name Nicasius. He comes from Die, or some such place. Here, now, come two, both most excellent."

“How are you, my son?” said the elder of the two.

“What a glorious day!” cried the younger.

“I thank your Paternity, I am quite well. Hermogenes, my lord and father bade me to thank you for the list of passages you gave him from your Cappadocian writers,—some of them we have not at Alexandria. If some time you would call on him, he would fain ask you a question or two regarding some of them.”

“With all my heart,” said the other, “if my lord here will spare me.”

“Certainly,” said the Bishop.

“At noon?” suggested Athanasius.

“At noon be it, then.”

“That is Leontius of Cæsarea,” said my friend, as we passed on. “I never heard a man preach more eloquently. They call him the ‘Equal of the Angels;’—and so holy he seems to me.”

“The other—”

“The other was his syncellus, and a dear friend of mine, Hermogenes; he is mighty in the Scriptures, and in the writings of the saints also. Look! here is the Great Church: shall we go in?”

It had not been built more than ten years, and was gorgeous with all manner of marbles. The screen was of brass of exquisite design, of open work, especially the holy doors. But a rich silken curtain hung within it, very massy and thick, and embroidered with gold. The whole interior of

the apse, as well as of the prothesis and sacristy, was inlaid with marble; the pillars were borrowed from some ruined temples in the vicinity of the city, no work of our own being equal to that. And this reminds me of a question which has often puzzled me, namely, why it is that we Christians, whose faith is so glorious beyond that of the heathen, have not an art corresponding to it. I wonder whether our buildings, and paintings, and poems will always be barbarous, as they are now, compared with the classical beauty which belongs to the worshippers of false gods. As we entered the church we noticed a bishop who was on his knees before the holy doors. He presently arose, and briefly saluting my companion, led the way out.

"I have been diligently examining this church," said he, "for we are about to build one, which we intend to be far superior to anything we at present have, in my own city."

"In a town so exposed to the Persians," said Athanasius, "I almost wonder that it should be thought advisable to lay out any considerable sum on an edifice which may almost any day be destroyed."

"Why, God has hitherto preserved Nisibis," said the other, "from their armies, and we hope that He will still continue to do so."

I perceived that he to whom we were speaking must be James, whose name was even then famous

at Alexandria, and who has since been illustrious through the whole world. With him Athanasius had much talk regarding the faith in those realms which are beyond the Roman empire. The new doctrine, he said, was perfectly unknown there; all the great cities, both under the Roman power, as Nisibis itself, or the Persian, as Ctesiphon, were firm to the old teaching. Some few bishops had come up to the council,—not many, because both of the great distance and of the war.

What a marvellous morning that was to me! It seemed as if all the saints and heroes of the Church passed before me even as in show and review. And now they have all—all without any one exception—entered into that true keeping of Sabbath. Their battles, and toils, and persecutions—well, they are over, as some day ours also will be, and then I shall behold them again!

When it drew towards noon, Athanasius enquired if I had any appointed place where I could be present at the opening of the council before the Emperor; and when I said No, he told me that he was well acquainted with one of the porters of the palace, in the great hall of which was to be the general session, and that to him he would recommend me. “But,” said he, “you must be there by the eighth hour at the latest, better half-an-hour sooner than later.” I promised him that I would not fail, and so we parted.

CHAPTER VII.

*Helladia is sick to death.—Faith is the gift of God.—
She begins to doubt Arius and desires to see an
orthodox priest.*

BEFORE I left Alexandria I was very uneasy regarding poor Helladia. At first she had thrown herself, heart and soul, wholly, earnestly, passionately, into the cause of Arius, nothing doubting that it was the cause of God. Beautiful she had always been; but her eagerness in devoting herself to the propagation of that which she thought the truth, her self-sacrifice in the matter of Menas, whom of a surety she had dearly loved; and afterwards, her oblation of herself and final vow,—all these things spiritualized her beauty, till at length, from being merely pretty, she became strikingly lovely. For full two years she never wavered, never faltered; heard of anathema after anathema, excommunication after excommunication, and seemed to rejoice and exult in each, as a new jewel in the crown of her spiritual father. For a moment the altered doxology seemed to shake her, but it was only for a moment. Earnest as she was in prayer, I often marvelled, and told her so, that she could draw nigh to God the Judge without God the Advocate; that she could believe in redemption and hope from God without

the Incarnation of God. But nothing seemed to touch or affect her. My father would not allow any but one-sided controversy: he was always ready enough to detail his Arian arguments, but any Catholic replies to them enraged him at once. Still, occasionally Helladia and I did argue the great question; but, as I saw that every quotation or argument of mine which she could not herself answer only induced another reference to, and conversation with, Arius, I by degrees ceased to discuss the subject with her. My prayers were earnest for her; those of Mennas were most fervent, though he knew that she could never be his; and indeed, before he had been long at Rome himself entered deacons', and was looking forward to priests', orders.

The first thing, I think, which really shook Helladia, was the publication of that infamous book, the *Thalia*. When she saw the deepest mysteries of religion treated in the lowest ballad language, and in a metre till then appropriated to subjects of disgraceful impurity, what could she think? what could she feel when, instead of arguments, Catholics were attacked with doggrel like this?

“A greater set of nonsense
Was surely never heard:
Incredible and silly,
Preposterous, absurd!
Such stuff as is rejected
By very boys at school:

Such mysteries as can only
Be handled by a fool.

“Be men, be men, Egyptians!
Or, rather than such lore,
Turn back again to Apis
And Isis as of yore.
They never in the old times
That saw King Pharaoh’s court,
Bowed down before the folly
That Catholics support.”

And these are some of the most innocent stanzas I could pick out; you may imagine—or rather you cannot imagine—the horrid blasphemy of ridiculing the blessed doctrine of the adorable Trinity in verses such as these. Sadly, sadly as she had fallen, Helladia shrank from this, and she told Arius so. He had yearly become more impatient of contradiction, and he was very angry. He said that the ignorant could not learn by deep argument; ridicule was the best method of teaching them; that what Elijah had done to the priests of Baal, he might lawfully do to the priests of a religion every whit as absurd. In fact, he worked himself up to such a pitch of anger, that my father, happening to enter the room, was himself amazed.

“My good friend,” said he, “it may be true that my daughter is not capable of arguing the question, but I would have you to remember that she *is* my daughter nevertheless, and a lady.” And so the thing passed over for that time. The visit

of Hosius, again, affected Helladia : he spoke so calmly, he argued so convincingly, he dwelt so forcibly on the whole consent of the universal Church throughout every nation, that I saw my poor sister had but little that she could reply ; the good seed fell into soil naturally good, and there it took root.

Then came illness. Perhaps, in consequence of her mental sufferings, Helladia's health began to fail. There was a deep-seated cough that would not be driven away ; she grew thin ; her nights were restless and feverish, her days wearisome. When she turned to the comfort and support of all Christians, the sympathy of the Lord, behold, it was only the sympathy of a man, and that was powerless to help. True, Jesus of Nazareth was exalted to dispense grace and comfort, but only as the channel of God, not by His own omnipotence. Prayer to Him was cold ; prayer without Him was terrible. Poor, poor child ! she groped on in darkness, finding none to help, none to sympathize. She saw the grave drawing nearer and nearer, for Eratosthenes the physician told my mother that all he could now do was to lengthen, not to preserve, life. This avowal of danger was made just after my father and Arius left Alexandria, and Helladia was therefore thrown into the charge of Euzoïus, inferior in all respects to his master. But, even when I left—at which time, according to the custom of that most delu-

sive disease, life seemed likely to win the day after all—she would not take me into her confidence. Still I could only pray for her; *with* her, the Church forbade.

About a fortnight after I had left, Helladia was lying on a *skimpous* drawn to the open window of the women's apartment. The soft breeze of the Mediterranean breathed in through myrtle, jessamine, and heliotrope. It was a cloudless day in the very glory and royalty of spring. My mother sat spinning by her child, sometimes saying a word about the weather, sometimes wondering where my father and I were, and how long our absence would continue; sometimes noticing one of the snowy-sailed boats that darted across the blue waves.

"Mother," said Helladia, after a longer silence than usual.

"Well, my child."

Another pause.—"Mother," again.

"Dearest one?"

"You know, mother, that I have not very long to live."

"My precious one! don't talk so. Perhaps God will raise you up again; you know you have been worse than you are now, have you not?"

"May be, mother; but my course is very nearly run. The question now is, Where shall I go when I die?"

"Oh my own pet lamb! oh my own darling

child!" and my poor mother began to cry and sob bitterly.

"Mother, I am not satisfied; I want to get back into the Church."

"O my precious pet," said my mother, "what will your father say?" and she quite shuddered.

"Is *that* worth consideration?" asked Helladia. "It is now a year since I had my doubts. That vile book—for let who will have written it, it is a vile book—began them."

Here she was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing.

"Better not talk so much, my precious one. There, there, lie down; you can talk about this at another time."

"When I have a more convenient season, I will send for thee," quoted my sister. "No, mother, I must speak, and I must speak now, and you must send for some priest who is not an Arian."

My poor mother made all the objections she could, but at length she was forced to promise a compliance. She hoped, however, to procrastinate the visit till perhaps Helladia should cease to wish it. Having no very strong religious feelings herself, and having been always accustomed to consider her husband—so far as she was concerned—an infallible guide, she could not understand all this distress, and regarded it as the result of an excited fancy acting on bodily weakness.

But God had provided other and better things.

I have already told you that all this while Mennas and my Theodora were at Rome. Theodora lived a retired life with an aunt, who possessed one of the *island* houses on the Palatine Hill. Mennas was in lodgings of his own, but attended the instruction provided for the theological students near the Lateran Church. Here he heard of the convocation of the Council of Nicæa, and was well acquainted with the subdeacons whom Pope Silvester appointed as his legates there. Just after their departure, Silvester laid hands on Mennas, who had been more than three years a deacon, and raised him to the priesthood.

It happened that a council had been summoned in order to discuss the universal controversy, and it had been resolved that, as soon as the synod of Nicæa was concluded, and the legates had returned, the Roman council should again meet to receive its canons, and to look to their dispersion through Europe. But the passage of St. Dionysius, which had been quoted from the very commencement at Alexandria, had also been brought forward at Rome, and as no very authentic manuscript of that Bishop's works existed in the imperial city, it was agreed to procure one from Alexandria. With this errand Mennas was charged by Silvester, and he started at about the very same time that I sailed for Byzantium.

But he started not alone.

Towards the close of the preceding winter, the aunt with whom Theodora had been staying, died. Her property went to a distant nephew, except a small legacy that was bequeathed to Theodora. And as she had no relative or especial friend in Rome, she determined to return to Alexandria. Hearing of the commission entrusted to Mennas, she entreated him to take charge of her a second time. A letter was despatched to my mother, preparing her for Theodora's return, and in due time the priest and my dear betrothed one sailed from the Port of Rome. It so happened that they had a singularly favourable passage, while the vessel by which the letter was sent was delayed by contrary winds; and thus, as it fell out, their actual arrival anticipated their intelligence.

So at the very moment at which my mother and Helladia were discussing that question of all questions—What is death? Theodora, wearied and ill with her voyage, was being carried up from the Quay in a litter,—Mennas hastening to present himself, in the Bishop's absence, to the Archdeacon, together with the letters of Silvester.

After this explanation I may go on.

“Well, my child,” said my mother, “if you truly and really feel this, God forbid that I should put any obstacle in your way. I must do what I can at your father's return; in the meanwhile, I will make enquiries about a priest.”

She had scarcely spoken, when Theodora entered. I leave you to fancy the intense surprise, a surprise almost too much for the weakness of poor Helladia. But very soon it was her greatest comfort to tell all her doubts, all her difficulties, all her distresses, to that loving and faithful ear. Not that day, but the next, they had a long talk on this matter.

“Do you not know,” asked Theodora, “that Mennas returned with me? Why not tell him all your troubles?”

“Oh no! I could not,” cried my poor sister, hiding her face on her friend’s shoulder.

“Yes, but I think you could,” said Theodora. “Listen : he has long prayed for you as for a sister only : you are doubly separated from each other. If you had never taken this vow, you could not be his ; he has been admitted to priests’ orders. But if, darling, it is as you think, and God is about to take you to Himself, let Mennas, so true-hearted as he is, be the one to teach you how you may stand before His presence safely.”

“I will think about it,” whispered Helladia.

CHAPTER VIII.

Macarius attends the opening of the great and œcumenical Council.—They authorize a symbol.

THANKS to the repeated and earnest warning of Athanasius, my father (for he went with me) and I were in ample time at the palace. The whole square in front of it was alive with a vast multitude; yet, by the exertions of the soldiers, a broad lane was preserved for the bishops, and a narrow passage for those who had the right of entrance to the galleries. All, however, were not so fortunate as we were: I saw several of the best families in the city trying in vain to bribe their way in^k, an attempt as useless as that of the Danaïds. The hall in which the synod was to meet^l was, as I have said, in the palace. It might be about eighteen orgyies^m in length by five in breadth, richly adorned with gold and carving; the ceiling, in particular, had a representation of Morning driving forth her steeds from the palace

^k The expression in the original MS. is, τὸ λεγόμενον δὴ τοῦτο εἰς Δαναΐδων τοὺς ἀμφορέας ἐκχέοντες πίθους.

^l Our writer constantly speaks of this as if it were the first session. We are bound, however, to credit the historians of the council, that several more private sessions had been held before, probably not in the hall, and certainly not with the same degree of splendour. The reason why Constantine had been delayed from visiting Nicæa earlier was that he had been celebrating the anniversary of his victory over Licinius at Nicomedia.—TRANSL.

^m 108 ft. by 30.—TRANSL.

of Ocean ; you almost saw the foam of the billows under her wheels. On each side were two rows of chairs, covered with crimson cloth, for the bishops ; and yet a third row, below these, of benches, for the various assessors, priests, scribes, scholars. The chairs at the upper end of the hall were also in two rows, four on each side of the Emperor's throne in each row. By degrees the hall filled. I felt a friendly touch on my shoulder : Athanasius was there.

"The Emperor," said he, "will not be here this half-hour ; he has not yet begun to vest. What a sight it is ! Oh how that prayer has been in my mind, 'Gird Thee with Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Thou most mighty, according to Thy worship and renown !'"

He was silent for a moment. The deep, low, earnest hum of an expectant assembly.

"Do you see the bishop nearest the throne on the right ?"

"Yes," said I : "a very fine-looking old man. How upright he sits !"

"That is Eustathius of Antioch," said Athanasius. "Look to the left—he that is nearest to the throne—"

"Is Hosius, is it not ?"

"Right, as the first Roman legate. Those two next him are Victor and Vitus, priests : I don't think very much of them. They know Mennas well."

“Indeed!”

“Yes; did you know he was either at, or going to, Alexandria?”

“No, indeed; I had—”

All on a sudden, not a shout,—no, but an ejaculation, as if the feelings of the assembly could not be controlled,—

“Holy God! Holy Mighty! Holy Immortal! have mercy upon us!”

It went up like a solemn hymn to heaven, and then silence.

I saw the tears in the eyes of Athanasius. Then he went on:—“You see, beyond Vitus, that crafty-looking, dark man?”

“Quite well.”

“That is Menophantus of Ephesus; and I wish he were anywhere else.”

“Why?”

“He is a red-hot Arian, and I like not to see him so near the legates.”

“You are safe enough with Hosius, however.—There are one or two others by them, who are they?”

“The very tall man, he that is a Saul among the rest, is—let me see—is—one confuses names among so many—aye, is Pistus of Athens; he answers to his nameⁿ. And by him is a most dear friend of mine, one for whom I would die with joy, one from whom I have learnt more than from any

ⁿ “Faithful.”

other living person,—Alexander of Thessalonica. There, on the other side of the throne, you see our own Pope; how worn he is, and well he may be; he is just leaning over Macarius of Jerusalem, and he to whom he is whispering is Leontius, whom we fell in with this morning.”

“And that bishop who is sitting by himself, as if he had not a very large acquaintance?”

“I dare say he has not,—that is Cæcilianus of Carthage. Ha! those are the trumpets! I must leave you: the Emperor is coming. Pray that the right may prosper.” And he hurried from the gallery: and we presently saw him stealthily making his way behind the chairs, and taking his place at the back of Alexander of Alexandria.

“That is a very able young man,” said my father; “I will say that for him.”

“And as good as he is able, my father, if you would but believe it.”

“Humph!” returned he.

And now, the trumpets sounding fiercely outside, the doors at the lower end of the hall were thrown open, and Constantine entered. Tall, well-made, with an eagle eye, clad in the imperial purple, with a light crown of gold that was set with rubies and sapphires alternately, he looked every inch an emperor. He was accompanied by a few friends only, all of them Christians. As soon as he entered the hall he stopped, and made a low obeisance to this side and to that. He then

passed slowly and modestly up, and took his place by the throne; but did not sit down till the bishops, who had risen at his entrance, made a sign for him to do so.

Now, my children, I am not writing a history of the Church: what followed you can read in Sozomen, if you would hear the true side; or Philostorgius^o, if you desire the Arian version. How Eustathius of Antioch welcomed the Emperor, how Constantine answered him; how Eusebius of Nicomedia, by his pure Arianism, excited the indignation of the assembled Fathers; how, after hours of talk, the session broke up that evening, I need not tell you here. The history of that and the three or four next days was the same. The session began about the fourth hour, and lasted till the tenth, or eleventh, or twelfth, sometimes till the first or second of night. I heard, of course, the cream of the arguments on both sides. My father's lodgings were filled every evening with the heads of the Arian faction; there, for example, were constantly Paulinus of Tyre, Aetius of Lydda, who seemed to me far beyond Arius himself in bold impiety; Maris of Chalcedon, Patrophilus of Beth-shan. Many and many a lovely May evening, while the sun was deluging those soft western slopes with purple light, I was

^o Would that we now had the Church History of Philostorgius! but it has perished, excepting only the poor fragments preserved by Photius.—TRANSL.

compelled to hear the long, weary, never-ending dissertation on Consubstantial, and *Pari-substantial*, and *Diverse-substantial*, till the stars came softly out, and filled a heaven of peace above an earth of strife.

One evening, I remember, when (the session having broken up somewhat sooner than usual) Athanasius and I were taking a stroll on the open downs to the north-east, I said something of the kind that I have just written down.

“All very pretty, all very pretty,” he replied; “but, Macarius, if God’s work is to be done in these hot, close rooms, amidst all that strife of tongues, where men wrangle and bellow for the mastery till quiet seems lost from the world, why then there, and not on these evening hills, with all their sunset beauty, be my place. Don’t think that I do not feel their beauty, that I could not long to drink my full of it, that I could not wander in the summer copse, or by the brook side, till my soul were steeped, as it were, with their loveliness. I have dreamed of such a life; I have dreamed, perhaps, of a sweet companion, whom I should feel trembling with the beauty and the love of the hour upon my arm, whose cheek should rest on my shoulder, whose eyes I might read as,” he added, smiling, “I have seen you read your *Theodora’s*. But it is not for me. Mine, I know it, is to be a life of strife; the strife of blaspheming tongues and of Gallio-like poli-

ticians; the strife of strong enemies and weak friends. But—”

And he looked upward, and verily his face was as it were the face of an angel.

Five or six such walks I had with him, sometimes alone, sometimes with one or more of his most intimate friends; oftenest, perhaps, with that Hermogenes whom I mentioned to you not long since, and who, in process of time, became Bishop of Cæsarea.

But though I have said that I do not intend to be an historian of the council, I will relate, as well as I can, what happened on one evening: that one particular evening which was, so to speak, the keystone of the whole proceedings. The synod had met, much as it had done on the first day, except that the Emperor was not there. Eustathius of Antioch was president; he sat on a chair placed in front of, but rather lower than, the golden throne. By this time the principal speakers of the council were known to all; the strength of the Arians, reckon it as you would, did not exceed twenty or twenty-one; the whole number was 318. It was a number that was much remarked, not only as being the same with that of the trained servants of Abraham, the father of the faithful, but as forming the Lord's name with the cross.

T	=	300.
I	=	10.
H	=	8.

AM.

G

The Arian bishops usually collected together in the front and hired benches, near the upper part of the room, on the Emperor's left hand, and so near the Roman legates and Menophantus of Ephesus.

It was now wished to draw up a creed, which should serve to express the faith of the Church, and which should yet be accepted—if it might so be—by all the prelates. The only difficulty was that which concerned the Son of God,—to use language which could not be distorted, and which yet should be simple and short.

Alexander had been speaking, and he now concluded by proposing that the Council should simply declare the Son of God to be God.

There was a great shout of applause: "It is the faith of Peter! it is the faith of Paul! Anathema to him that gainsays!"

"My brother of Nicomedia," said the President, "has it your approbation that this sacred Council, inspired by the Holy Ghost, should declare the Son to be God?"

"I would so declare it with pleasure," said Eusebius; "but before I commit myself further, I would, with your Brotherliness's permission, consult with those with whom I usually act."

Accordingly, he, and several other of the Arian leaders, formed a circle towards the left hand upper corner of the hall, and seemed very eager in debate. Arius, Theonas of Marmarica, and

Menophantus of Ephesus appeared the most emphatic speakers. At the end of about a quarter of an hour Eusebius came forward, and the others resumed their seats.

“We are content,” said he, “that this should be so expressed in the Creed: ‘I believe in the Son of God, God Himself.’”

There was great applause, and I really thought that the two parties were coming to an agreement. But Athanasius seemed very ill at ease; he passed behind the golden throne, and spoke hastily to the legates. In another minute Hosius said, “Have I your Brotherliness’s leave to ask Arius a question?”

“Surely,” replied Eustathius.

“Arius,” said he, “do I understand *you* also to affirm that the Son of God is God?”

“I am ready to swear my belief in it,” replied he.

“And you would repeat the words as I have repeated them?”

“Surely; why not? Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, Ye are gods?’ If he then called them gods—”

Eusebius darted an indignant glance at Arius. So *this* was what they meant, this the grand truth so carefully to be embodied in the Creed, that, as *they* were called gods, so was the Eternal Word God,—*so*, and not otherwise!

“Out with the Egyptian! out with the heretic!”

was the cry. On the other hand—but there were not many voices — “Arius teaches as Peter!” “One Paul, one Arius!”

“*This* will not do,” said Hosius; “in the same sense we may affirm any holy man to be God.”

“Say,” said Leontius of Cæsarea, “that He is always God.”

“I do say so,” replied Arius.

“Nothing clearer,” cried Menophantus.

“Does this great and holy synod adopt that expression?” asked the President.

“Remembering,” said Arius, “that it is written, ‘We which live are always.’ Our Lord is, as I have expressed it, God; He lives God, therefore He is always God.”

“I affirm,” said Alexander, “that He is very God of very God.”

“I affirm the like,” retorted Eusebius; “if He has verily been so made, verily He so is. Why, the majority would be satisfied with nothing less than calling Him Consubstantial with the Father!”

“Let us say so!” cried Athanasius.

“The Holy Ghost speaks by Athanasius!” was the cry. “Athanasius a second Peter!” “Athanasius another Paul!” “Let us worship the Consubstantial!”

Louder cries of “Out with the second Apollinarius!” “Remove not the old landmarks!” “Athanasius to exile!”

When a little quiet was re-established, Eusebius

of Nicomedia rose: "I protest against the word," said he, "as not Scriptural. Why do we introduce words that are not in the Bible into our ecclesiastical formulæ?"

"Who ever heard such an objection?" retorted Leontius. "How then speak we of the Trinity itself? how of dioceses? how of provinces? how of parishes? how of the blessed Eucharist? And so I might add a hundred names of the like kind."

"Besides," said the other Eusebius, he that afterwards became the historian, "how dare we, or can we, introduce a word which was expressly condemned by a great council? My brother of Antioch, I charge you to tell us,—in the acts of the council holden against your predecessor Paul—"

There was a shout of "Anathema to the Samosatene!" "He that defends Paul is a Jew!"

"—were not the Fathers unanimous in affirming that the Son of God was not consubstantial with the Father, and in anathematizing such as should say He was?"

"It is true," replied the President.

"But," said Hosius, "why? Because that heretic, whom the Roman see condemns, used the word in an earthly and carnal sense, as if the Son were consubstantial with the Father in the same manner in which the earthly child is consubstantial with his parents, by way of carnal generation. *This* was the impiety which the

council condemned; the other question came not before them."

"If it please this holy Synod," said Athanasius, speaking for the first time that day, "I have the acts of that council, attested by the Archivist of Antioch, and by the handwriting of the late Bishop Paulinus. The President can certify, I doubt not, to the autograph of his predecessor of blessed memory."

"Let the book be handed in," said Eustathius. Athanasius brought it.

"If it be the pleasure of this great Synod to hear any portion of these acts, I can certify, by the truth of Jesus Christ,"—he laid his hand on his heart, and looked up to heaven,—“that this is the handwriting of my predecessor Paulinus, now with God, whom the Lord took to Himself less than twelve months ago. Also that this is the handwriting of Serbonas, Archivist of the Great Church, now living.”

"Read the acts!" was vociferated in the hall.

"The whole acts are very long," said Athanasius, "and the greater part of them have but little to do with the matter in hand. With the leave of the Synod, I will read those passages which bear on the subject now before this great Council, and will then leave the book with my lord, the Lord President, to the end that any who doubts whether I read them fairly may be able to certify himself."

This was done, and the passages thus read bore

fully out what Hosius had said. When the Deacon laid down the volume, and while a desultory conversation was going on, Arius beckoned for it. Athanasius gave it to him, and received in return from that meek, saintly face, such a scowl of deadly hate as I never elsewhere beheld.

“Bless my soul!” cried my father, who also noticed it.

The few Arians still continued to ring the changes on the want of Scriptural authority, and on the condemnation at Antioch; but the Council was evidently becoming impatient.

“Is it then the will of this great and œcumenical Council that the word ‘consubstantial’ shall stand a part of the Creed?”

After the usual hubbub, Eustathius said, “I must take your voices by numbers. First, let all men, save the bishops, withdraw to the lower end of the room.”

This was done; but presently there arose a fierce shout of “Theonas! Theonas! Secundus! Secundus!”

My father turned hastily round, in a maze of apprehension. One word from me made him smile at his own mistake.

“Upon my word,” said he, “one never can say what breach of good manners he may have been guilty of.”

Hosius in the meanwhile had risen: “I appeal,” he said, “to your Brotherliness, whether these two

can be permitted to vote in the Council, seeing that they were excommunicated in the council holden at Alexandria."

Eustathius looked for the moment rather puzzled. "It is true," said he, "that, according to the strictness of ecclesiastical rule, they ought not ; but considering that the very reason why this synod was convoked was to judge the dispute which brought about that council, I do not know that we are bound to accept its determinations as altogether binding ; or, in plain terms, if that council were decisive, no need of this ; if it were not decisive, Secundus and Theonas may take their place in this."

For the first time the decision of the President did not seem satisfactory to the Council, taken as a whole, though the shouts of the little band of Arians were long and loud. However, no further opposition was made ; nor indeed, considering the overwhelming Catholic majority, was it a point worth much debate. As we looked down from the galleries, those who were against the insertion in the future Creed of the word 'consubstantial' stood immediately below us, to be counted by units, while their opponents were to be numbered by scores. It happened that about fifteen of the Fathers were absent, and when the President had the list of names handed in to him, there were two hundred and eighty-six who believed in the Consubstantial, while only seventeen opposed its inser-

tion in the Creed. The next step was the appointment of a certain number of bishops to draw up the Creed. They chose twelve: I need not go through the names; but Leontius of Cæsarea was one of the principal; Hosius was chairman. They withdrew into one of the many apartments of the palace, the business being suspended while they were absent; and then arose the great hum of a body of men released, for the moment, from intense and overwhelming interest, and allowed a pause for mental recreation.

Athanasius again found his way to my side, as he generally did in such intervals. "What an afternoon this has been!" he said; "and how marvellously has God brought us through it."

"I almost wonder," said I, "that the minority is not larger. Consider the influence which Menophantus of Ephesus and Eusebius of Nicomedia have. I should have thought that their own followers would have amounted to a greater number than their supporters can muster altogether."

"If this were a synod of priests instead of bishops, I fear that the minority would be very much larger. The heresy needed, indeed, to be crushed in the egg, for the young dragon would soon have protruded in full strength and venom."

My father, I could see, was very much struck, perhaps startled, by the unanimous consent of the three hundred prelates. He was not an uncandid

man, and he was now forced to confess that the doctrines he had been embracing — he could scarcely tell why, at first—were henceforth to be the tenets of a sect cut off from the Church, no longer the opinions of a recognised body in the Church. Several times in the long evenings I had heard him say something of the same kind, but this day was the first on which numbers had been fairly tried ; and this was an argument which had especial weight with him. However, he said but little ; only I, who was accustomed to read his countenance, saw that he thought much.

Need I tell you how it was that the synod spoke ? I see them now, that little band of picked theologians, — martyrs, confessors, doctors, — as they again entered the hall, and sat together on chairs provided for them near the President. Then Hermogenes, that dear friend of Athanasius, came forward, and, receiving the orders of Eustathius to read the symbol aloud, did so thus :—

“ We believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible :

“ And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father ; by whom all things were made both in heaven and earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down and was incarnate, and was

made man. He suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead.

“And we believe in the Holy Ghost.

“And for them that say, concerning the Son of God, There was a time when He was not; and, He was not before He was produced; and, He was produced from things that are not; and, He is of another substance, or essence, or creature, or subject to conversion or mutation, the Catholic and Apostolic Church saith, Let them be anathema.”

CHAPTER IX.

*The great misery of Helladia, who cannot believe.—
One Anthony comes from the desert.—She departs
happily in the Lord.*

WHILE the fate of the Church trembled, to human eyes, in the balance at Nicæa, the eternal destinies of one poor girl were hanging in uncertainty at Alexandria.

Oh faith! misery, tenfold misery, to them that have lost it! You may cast away the jewel with an idle hand; you may search for it again with bitter tears in the wilderness of this world, and not be able to find it. Helladia, by slow degrees, had let her pearl be taken from her; and now,

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sinking into the grave, eternity spreading wider and wider before her, no daysman between the God of infinite justice and the naked soul, trembling in its infinite impurity,—what could she fly to, whom could she hope in?

She *could* not believe.

Mennas pleaded her cause in earnest prayer with That Saviour Whom she had rejected: it seemed all in vain.

“Try,” he would say, “to cry out, as the poor father of old, ‘Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.’”

“I cannot,” she answered, with a look of settled despair. “I would give all I have, I would go through tortures like those of the martyrs, if I might but believe that Jesus of Nazareth is very God. Oh if I could! oh if I could but think that He who died on the cross in agony is the eternal God!”

“You did believe so once, my poor, poor child.”

“I did; and I bartered my faith for Arius. He moulded me as he would; he persuaded me to cast away my trust: I see how false, how cruel, how delusive is his doctrine, and yet I cannot grasp yours. O God! would that I had never been born!”

So she would talk till some fearful fit of coughing seemed to threaten immediate dissolution, and the thin pale hands grew thinner and paler,

the hollow cheeks more sunken, the bright beautiful eyes kindled into unnatural brightness.

“What can I, shall I do?” said Eratosthenes; “she has a weight on her mind that no earthly physic can reach. Remove that, Sir,”—he was speaking to Mennas,—“and though recovery is impossible, I might promise you lengthened life and euthanasy.”

“Ah, Sir, that is in God’s hands; my poor efforts are useless; He must manifest His own strength, for mortal help is in vain.”

My poor mother! she did not believe, she had not depth of mind to feel, that the controversy was one of salvation and damnation: she hoped that both sides would meet in a common heaven; she was rather sorry that her husband had thought fit to follow the newer doctrine, but she thought, as a good obedient wife, that she could only follow it too. And poor, poor comfort was hers to the dying girl, straining, in the last agony of departing existence, for that faith, once hers, now so fondly, so madly lost.

It was about a month after Mennas’s return; the weather was intensely hot, and increased the dying Helladia’s sufferings to a fearful extent. It was evening; the sun had gone down; there was a tremulous silver whiteness on the sea, where an hour before had been the path of glory to the West, and the whole occident was like a glorious meadow, only greener than was ever the luxuriance

of the Fortunate Isles, and one star bloomed out upon its beauty, a glorious flower of gold.

Helladia's couch had been moved to the open window. None in the house attempted to conceal from himself or from others that she had but a few hours to live.

"Oh how I used to long," she said, "when I was a child, to travel up that path to the country where it leads! and how I would build up to myself a glorious city in those clouds, with their sunset beauty! The childish vision is gone, and the real, true prospect is utter darkness!"

Mennas and my mother were sitting in the room. There was a perfect silence, except for the sobs of the latter. At length the Priest quoted, very slowly and calmly: "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him: He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him: but He knoweth the way that I take."

"And you feel this, Helladia, now."

"I do not complain: I deserve all I suffer. Faith is the gift of God. I had it once." She spoke in broken sentences, as if the effort of many words together were getting beyond her power.

"And you will have it again, Helladia. You say that you would suffer anything to win it back—"

"Would I not?" she exclaimed, with all her poor strength. "God knows I would."

“Then, however long He may seem not to hear you, He will hear you at last. Trust wholly to Him; say as the poor thief,—‘And we indeed justly!’ and, ‘Heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.’”

So they sat on, night darkening and darkening. The window was closed; the moon came up from the horizon; the Mediterranean heaved and rippled in her golden beauty. Eratosthenes paid his evening visit; Mennas left the room while the physician made his accustomed—oh how unavailing!—enquiries, but met the man of science in the hall.

“How is she to-night, Sir?”

“Sinking rapidly; I doubt if she sees sunrise.”

“So soon!” cried Mennas.

“Nature cannot support this mental struggle much longer; the kindest thing to wish for is her deliverance. I assure you, if her bodily powers protract the conflict with death much longer, I tremble for her mind. But come, walk with me towards my house: you are injuring yourself by your own anxiety. A man of the world like myself—though I assure you I am as staunch a Catholic as any one—cannot be supposed to feel this matter quite so deeply as you do. Come, if it be but for half-a-mile; and I assure you that she is better left alone just at present.”

Mennas, hardly knowing why, consented. “Tell

your lady," he said to Ammonarium, "that I shall be back in half-an-hour." And the two went forth together.

A marvellous sight was Alexandria at night-fall. Great oil lamps were flaring in every shop; boys with torches lighting passengers on their way; in the middle of the squares fires were lighted, even in the height of summer, partly for the light they gave, partly because they were considered preservatives against the plague, which in the hot months always exists, more or less, in the crowded alleys of the city. So past jewellers' shops, past the idol-makers, who still drove a flourishing trade, and where you might buy a Minerva, or an Apollo, or a Juno, if you were of the Latin religion, at a reasonable rate; an Isis or Osiris, if you were an Egyptian, much cheaper; past statuaries, with which the city abounded; past emporiums of silk, and woven air^p, and other luxuries of the East; past fishmongers, who imported their oysters even from Richborough in Britain,—Mennas and Eratosthenes walked on. The physician lived in the most fashionable quarter of the city,—at least, so it was then; it is where now the catechetical school stands; and Mennas accompanied him from this house almost as far as that point; then he bade him good night and returned. But he had not gone far, when, coming to the corner of the street of the Unmercenary

Ones, which was then called the street of the Twin Goddesses, a very, very old man, but in a hale and bright old age, came down that street and met him. He was clothed in a sheepskin, and, under that, in a piece of sacking only; he wore a kind of cap made of sacking, had sandals on his feet, and a very sturdy staff in his hand. Mennas saw at once that he was one of the hermits who were then beginning to congregate round the mountain of Nitria.

“My business is with you, my son,” he said.

“With me, good father! and yet I know you not.”

“Did Philip know the Eunuch to whom he was sent?” replied the old man. “The Lord has given me a commission to you, and that is enough.”

“More than enough, good father,” said Mennas, who knew that, without some urgent cause, one of these anchorites would not be found in the city.

“You have,” said the old man, walking on with him, “a very dear charge at home, even now in the valley of the shadow of death.”

“True, my father.”

“And, according to that of the Psalmist, ‘Fearfulness and trembling are come upon her, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed her.’ ”

“God only knows how truly you speak, my father.”

“I am called Anthony,” said the old man, “a miserable sinner: and my business is with her.

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Let us be quick, for the sands of her life are running out very fast, and I would fain be back in the desert."

Young and vigorous though Mennas were, he had some difficulty in keeping up with the old man's steps. Leading the way rather than following, Anthony proceeded straight to my father's house, but spoke no more. When they came to the outer door, the old man struck with his staff on the *Cave Canem* written on the pavement, and said, "What dog is that, my son?"

Mennas looked at him without understanding.

"I say, my son," continued Anthony, in a louder voice, "what dog is that?"

And as the other did not reply, he added, answering his own question, "It is Arius. Now follow me in."

As he spoke they knocked within¹, and Anthony, entering as if he had been acquainted with the house all his life, passed up the long corridor, turned to the left, and, without any ceremony, went into the room where Helladia was lying, followed closely by Mennas, who, as you may suppose, was very eager to learn in what all this would terminate.

The couch, it was a *skimpous*, on which the

¹ As the street doors of the Romans always opened outwards, it was customary that any one wishing to come out, or to open the door, should knock on its inside, to give notice to those in the street who might happen to be passing.—TRANSL.

dying girl was lying, was still in the same place where it had been when Mennas had left the room, by the window; only now the moon-path on the sea was more golden, and had travelled a little towards the west. My mother was seated by the side of the *skimpons*; and Ammonarium stood by the window crying quietly. Helladia seemed to be in greater mental agony than even before the visit of Eratosthenes. She did not at first see who it was that entered the room; her mother stood up with an expression of surprise, and Ammonarium took one step forward, as if doubtful whether to call assistance. Seeing Mennas, however, they seemed to look to him for an explanation of so strange an intrusion.

“Peace be to this house,” said Anthony, in a clear, calm voice. “My child, I am a miserable sinner that dwells in the desert, but God has sent me to you. You are led away by the allurements of that wolf in sheep’s clothing, who in due time shall go”—and he shuddered as if some dreadful vision came across him—“to his own place.”

“I was so, holy father.”

“I am not holy, my child, nor yet a priest; but I am God’s messenger still. And now that you would fain return to the Catholic belief, you find that you cannot; that faith is the gift of God, and that He has not as yet bestowed it upon you?”

The poor trembling lips said, “Yes.”

“And you have cried to God with all your might that He would remove this darkness from you?”

“Yes,” again.

“And you have thought His help very long in coming?”

“Oh so long !”

“But it has come at last.” He paused for a few seconds, and then continued, “Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, co-equal, and co-eternal, and consubstantial with the Father? My child, in the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, I command you to say Yes.

“I do, I do !” she cried, her whole face lighting up with joy: “I do believe with all my heart and soul; the darkness is quite gone.” And she raised herself on the couch, as if she would fain have thrown herself at the feet of the anchoret.

“Then my work,” said Anthony, “is over here: we shall never meet again in this world. Mennas, remember me, a miserable sinner, in your prayers.”

He was gone before they could realize what had happened, or what was the full meaning of his words. But then, in an ecstasy of gladness, Mennas turned to the bed-side. Helladia had sunk down on the couch; the same beautiful smile was on her lips; but her spirit had gone to be with that Jesus of Nazareth Whom she had confessed God with her latest breath.

CHAPTER X.

The conclusion of the Council.—Theonas consents to his son's marriage.

THIS happened on the same night on which, in far-off Nicæa, the Creed was drawn up. I now return to that place.

How can I tell you of the confusion and tumult in which the session concluded? The small but compact Arian minority declared that nothing should ever induce them thus to deny the old faith. They would raise their congregations; they would boldly affirm themselves to be *the Church*, and the *Athanasians* (for that name then first began to be used), to be the schismatics.

The whole city was filled with confusion: multitudes walked the streets till far on in the depth of night: here and there even disturbances; some damage was done to the lodgings of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and Arius was hunted home by some of the young townsmen.

My father did not conceal from me his uneasiness. "It is difficult," he said, "to know what course to pursue. I will freely confess it, I had no idea that the majority against us would be such as it is. When I saw the numbers of the Council, I thought that, perhaps, we might reckon some 120 or 130 to your 200 or 190. As it is, though I do not allow that a mere majority is

enough to settle a question of truth, I do think that such a majority as this is a very serious thing. I cannot see how the promise is fulfilled, 'Lo! I am with you alway,' if, when the Church has free voice to speak, not one in sixteen hold the truth. I must sleep upon this, aye, and not to-night only, but many nights, perhaps. But I will deal candidly with you, my son, and tell you if any change should occur in my judgment."

On the next morning Constantine, who had in the meantime received warning that, if he were not there, the session was likely to be a stormy one, was present. At first, matters proceeded tranquilly enough: the Creed was produced, read over, and then the signatures were called for. And for two hours metropolitan after metropolitan, and bishop after bishop, came up to the little table of signature, took pen in hand, and affixed his name. The recusants held back to the last.

There were seventeen; Eusebius of Nicomedia was their spokesman.

After much disputing,—“I entreat you,” he cried, “august Emperor, not to drive us to stand at bay. We have done good service to your throne; we have ever prayed for your life, and that of your august family; we have laboured for the propagation of the true faith; and now, for a word, unknown to—unknown to?—rather, rejected by—our fathers, we are to be made offenders.”

Hosius was about to reply, but the Emperor rose.

“This great and œcumenical Synod,” said he, “has been the mouth; I am but the hand. What it confirms with the sword of the Spirit, I will ratify by the carnal weapon. I pronounce no theological judgment; but the bishop that signs not this symbol is sent into exile.”

The resolute manner in which he spoke shewed that no entreaties could move him. My father, who had always had a great idea of obeying the constituted authorities, even in matters in which they cannot speak with any validity of judgment, was very much shaken.

After an hour’s weary discussion, twelve more signed. And now there were but five dissentients,—Eusebius of Nicomedia, Theognius of Nicæa, Maris of Chalcedon, and Secundus and Theonas of Lybia.

For some time I thought that these five would have remained firm; but the love of the world was too strong in Eusebius. Just as the Emperor was about to declare the session at an end, he advanced to the table. For a moment his hand was held over the symbol itself, as if he were diligently perusing it. He then signed hastily, and Maris and Theognius followed his example.

Mean liars! Eusebius had inserted an *i*, thus turning *homoüsios* into *homoiüsios*^r; as if thus they could cheat the Searcher of all hearts. But the guile answered—in this world.

^r i.e. of the same substance into of like substance.

Theonas and Secundus, and I honour them for it, stood firm. "Exile, imprisonment, tortures, death if it needs be, but no Consubstantial!"

And perhaps the Consubstantial, rewarding their honesty and pardoning their unbelief, has admitted them into that kingdom where, if every one that "maketh a lie" is excluded, Eusebius, Maris, and Theognius can never have place.

* * * * *

I need not dwell on the canons of that great Council, on the concluding session and enactments, nor on the final banquet with which Constantine terminated the proceedings. Ten days did not elapse from its conclusion, before the good ship Onocentaur, bearing my father and myself, was bounding southward over the Ægean.

"I remain in my old belief," my father had said; "but you have stood the test nobly, and I hold out no longer. Theodora shall be yours when you both will."

We little thought of the great woe that was to meet us at Alexandria; and yet, for me, woe mingled with joy. But let that pass.

If we could have soared far above this earth, within a fortnight after the termination of the Council, what should we have seen passing below us for the Name and glory of the Consubstantial?

Who is this that, day after day, is traversing the fertile smiling plains of Galatia? The second hay harvest is smiling around him; the maize,

big, full-eared, waving in the breeze, spreads measurelessly before him; he tracks many a mile the smiling waters of the Halys; he sees the ruined castles of the Macedonian dynasty, that are reflected in its smooth bosom; the dragon-fly sports amidst its reeds, the moor-hen cowers amidst its banks, the bittern booms from its bul-rushes. Now Mount Ophlimus is golden in the sunrise; now he leaves it behind him, and it is purple in the sunset; now the midnight winds make wild music in the glens of the Anti-Taurus; now the great Euphrates flows on before him, exulting in its strength; now he sees the moon in the ripples of the lake of Ooromiaah; now the Caspian basks in the autumn sunshine before him. It is John, Bishop of Persepolis, who proclaims the tidings of the Consubstantial to Persia.

Who is this that, on a glorious autumn evening, passes the north-eastern African headland, runs into the long bay of Carthage, sees the sun go down behind the sandhills,—which he fires into the hue of molten iron,—and the palm-trees wave softly in the breeze; that passes the ruined temples of the rival of Rome, and goes forth into the oases of the great African desert? It is Cæcilian, Metropolitan of Carthage.

Who is it that lands in the busy port of Barcnone, and sees the glorious sunset on the Orosipedan range? who proclaims the Consubstantial in the churches of Toledo, and skirts the banks

of the gold-bearing Tagus? who lingers in the lovely vales of Gallæcia, that earthly paradise, where the pendent grapes festoon the roads, and the fire-flies dart from the hedges, and the luscious oranges hang amidst their snowy blossoms, and myrtle and olive and heliotrope perfume the air? It is Hosius, Bishop of Cordova.

Who lands at busy Massilia, and hears the Greek of Athens; ascends the Rhine to his bridal meeting with Arar; proclaims the faith in regal Lugdunum; preaches to the half-civilized Sequani and Lingones; tells of the Consubstantial in Lutetia and along the banks of the Sequana; skirts the coasts of the British ocean to Bononia; ventures, inspired by the love of Christ, to cross it to the Portus Lemanianus, along the Watling Way to Londinium, by the Ermine Street to Durolipons, thence by the Via Devana to Mediolanum and distant Deva? Gorgeous sunsets he saw across the ocean of Rutunian forests, purple loveliness round the Welsh ridges; and everywhere he taught that Christ was co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, and preached the faith of Nicæa. It is Vitus, Roman legate.

Who is this in the snow-sailed *cercurus* that darts from island to island of the blue Ægean, to the cove beautiful with its fishing village, and ruined temple, and rising church; to the vineyard, to the maize-field, to the corn-land, to the shelly beach, to the broad white shelly

tracts of sand? who that rambles through groves once dedicated to the worship of idols, now, with the "sound of the going" in their summits, singing anthems to the one true God? Delian Apollo, Chian Aphrodite, Methymnæan Zeus, Lesbian Dionysus, in the ground once sacred to you, Alexander of Byzantium preaches the Consubstantial.

And, lastly, who is this that is drawing near the scenes of man's redemption? Libanus with its cedars makes a bed for the last rays of the sun; Mount Carmel, breasting the Mediterranean, marks his base with snowy foam for many a mile; the hills of Ebal and Gerizim are silent in the noontide glare; now the City of Palm-trees is passed; now, rising on the horizon, Mount Moriah is the pilgrim's goal; now he passes the excavation where the Saviour of the world was crucified, and where they hope to find His cross; and now he enters the Judicial Gate, and follows the Via Dolorosa to the centre of the city. It is Macarius of Jerusalem.

Thus, as soon as the Fathers of the Council ceased speaking, "their sound went out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world."

* * * * *

Well, my children, need I tell you the joy of that moment when, after six years of separation, I held Theodora to my heart, and told her that God had given her to me? Or need I say

that, deferring our marriage out of love to our Helladia, we were crowned for each other after the ensuing Pentecost by Athanasius, (for Alexander had slept in the Lord,) then Pope of Alexandria?

No; but I have something else to tell you still.

It was eleven years after the great Council. Many of that generation had been gathered to their fathers; among others, Constantine.

Everywhere throughout the Church was fierce strife and contention. There was council after council; synods of Arians, semi-Arians and Catholics; creeds dated and undated, long-tailed creeds and short-tailed creeds; never had the Church been so tempest-tossed; never had the dove found so little rest for the sole of her foot. But with me, through the blessing of God, things had gone very happily. My Theodora was now the mother of five children; two little girls, named after herself and Helladia, my eldest boy, called after me, Athanasius, and Mennas. By the bye, Mennas, of whom I have had occasion to say so much, and who lifted this child from the font, joined the mission to Ethiopia, and has lately been consecrated bishop somewhere in Nubia.

My father still remained a firm Arian; but he was on the best terms with us, and even permitted my mother to return to her old faith.

In the spring of the year of which I speak it was necessary that both he and I should visit Constantinople. There were very large dealings

between our house and the chief purveyors of that place; and the head partner of their firm happening to die suddenly, our accounts were thrown into such confusion that, in order to unravel them, the heads of the two houses resolved to meet. I was very sorry to be forced to leave Alexandria at all, but more especially at the beginning of the great fast. We had a prosperous voyage, and reached the imperial city about the middle of the Forty Days. We had arrived at a most critical season. A council had been held, in which that extraordinary man, Marcellus of Ancyra, had been condemned, whether justly or unjustly God knows. The principal personages of both parties were now at Constantinople, and Constantius had been persuaded by that great intriguer, Eusebius of Nicomedia, who had one foot in the grave, to insist on the reception of Arius to communion in the Great Church. It was in vain that that venerable old prelate, Alexander, then archbishop, besought and adjured the Emperor not to be guilty of so great a crime. The Arian party appeared to have all the power on their side, and were determined to use it to the utmost. The day fixed for this reception was the following Sabbath, we having arrived on the Thursday. We had lodgings at the house of one Tarasius, a shell-fish seller, and as we sat at dinner on the Friday my father was in unusual spirits.

“We shall win the day, after all,” said he. “I called on my old friend Arius this morning,—aged he is, but he looks very well,—to congratulate him. I have promised to join the procession to-morrow: childish things these processions are, to my taste, but still he wished it, and so I said yes. Shall you be there?”

“I am going presently to call on the bishop,” answered I; “I shall probably be with him.”

“Well,” said my father, “remember that we have a meeting of the partners at the second hour to-morrow; and whatever you do, you must not fail that.”

Dinner over, I went out to call on Alexander, with whom I had been somewhat intimate at Nicæa. There I found James of Nisibis, and my old friend Hermogenes.

“Ah, Macarius!” said Alexander; “you see us indeed in distress. This day is a day of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy, as the Prophet saith. I see no possible means of escape, unless God Himself shall stretch forth His hand on our behalf.”

“The more reason then,” said James, “have we to cry out with holy David, ‘Plead Thou my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me;’ and we will do it to-night.”

“Yes,” said Hermogenes; “this night I, if no one else, will spend before the altar of the Great Church. It is time indeed for us to cry mightily

to God, for there seems no hope of assistance from man."

"I also shall do the same," said Alexander. "My people have fasted now seven days, being instant in their supplications, either that God would turn the Emperor's heart, or that Arius might be taken out of the world."

"And I, too," said James of Nisibis, "will not fail to be with you. Let us three bishops be found where bishops ought to be in time of extremity, at the altar of the universal Bishop of souls."

"I am but a layman," said I, "but may I be found with you to-night?"

"Come with us," said Alexander; "others beside you will keep vigil in the church: the time appointed is from midnight till sunrise."

Never before nor since have I passed a night like that. The whole church was full of men praying silently; the galleries were, in like manner, thronged with women. The holy doors were open, and beyond them we saw the three bishops kneeling before the holy table, and twenty-four priests behind them. In all that great multitude was profound silence; but hour after hour of the night-watches the incense of much prayer was offered before the golden altar that is on high. By degrees the light stole in, the lamps seemed to grow pale, the various external sounds shewed that the great city was awaking to life. One by

one the worshippers went out; but the bishops, though Alexander was fourscore and six years old, still knelt on. And this, they said, was the continual prayer of the aged man,—“Either me or Arius, O Lord!—take either me or Arius out of the world!”

I transacted the business that I had to do, and then went back to see what was going on in the church. It was locked now, I found, to prevent any insults from the Arians; but the hierophylax told me that the bishops had never come out, that the priests had now returned, and meant to remain there till the last moment.

About mid-day people began to wend their way to the Emperor's palace, for from thence the procession was to start, and, taking the whole circuit of the city, to finish at the Great Church.

Though it was in Lent, Eusebius had given a sumptuous banquet to the principal persons of his party, several of them being men high in station at court. My father had been invited, but was unable to attend; he, about the seventh hour, went down to the appointed place, and took up his position in the procession. For the next hour and a-half the sound of trumpets, flutes, and haut-boys came more clearly or more softly over the city, as the procession wound through the nearer or more distant streets. At length, it then wanting about half-an-hour to the time appointed for the reception, I went towards the church.

As I came opposite the porphyry pillar of Constantine, in the centre of the great square, the procession was making its entrance in the same square from the street of St. Irene. Now it turned to the left, expanding its full length as its foremost ranks got further and further round the quadrangle. Arius, Eusebius, Euzoïus, and other leaders, came almost last; my father had gone on a little before. They passed close to me: Arius, whom I had seen for a moment in the morning, and who was then unusually flushed, was now, I observed, deadly pale. Even as he was at the closest to me, he took hold of the arm of Euzoïus, and said, "I must stop for a moment."

"We are just there," said Eusebius: "are you not well?"

"I must go into a house," said the arch-heretic.

"Surely better push on to the church," remonstrated Euzoïus.

"Take me in, take me in!" he said, faintly, and leaning more heavily on his friend.

Word was passed along the procession to halt: Arius and Euzoïus went into a chemist's shop.

I thought there fell an unusual silence on the square. In a moment the chemist darted out and ran across the place to the house of Caius Armentarius, the royal physician, who lived on the opposite side: he came out at once, and without replying to any of the numerous questions

put to him, hurriedly crossed the square and entered the shop.

The silence was now quite fearful. The time, I believe, was about three minutes, but it seemed to me an hour. Then Caius Armentarius came out, as pale almost as Arius had been.

“Gentlemen,” he said, to those around him, “I think you had better disperse: Arius is dead!”

Most true, most fearful! He had died the death of Judas Iscariot, all his bowels having gushed out.

On the Lord’s day that followed, my father, at the hand of Alexander, having made his profession of faith, was received to the belief, and in the Name, of the Consubstantial.

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